

McGill, Pam

From: Cox, Robert [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, November 13, 2023 10:10 AM
To: City Council
Subject: Livable Mountain View comment on Item 6.3: Mixed Use Development at 705 West Dana Street

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Mayor Hicks, Vice Mayor Showalter and Members of the Mountain View City Council,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Item 6.3: Mixed Use Development at [705 West Dana Street](#)

Without delving into the details of the project proposal, we would like to raise two fundamental concerns about the project outreach and materials in the staff report.

1. Public outreach: With regard to the neighborhood meeting, the staff report says only “The applicant held an in-person community meeting on April 17, 2023 to introduce the project and seek project feedback. However, no members of the public attended the meeting.” This gives the impression that there was little public interest in this project. On the contrary, the lack of participation in this initial meeting was due to a failure of the applicant to send notice to the Old Mountain View Neighborhood Association and the very small neighborhood area to which postcards were delivered. Once the neighborhood leadership found out about the project, they actively engaged with the applicant in a series of four meetings, one of which was held on Zoom and attended by many neighborhood residents. Residents raised issues about the project design, the elimination of trees, and the small amount of underground parking. None of this appears in the staff report. It leads us to ask whether staff was even aware of the interaction between the applicant and the neighbors. Without this input being of record and presented to Council as part of these proceedings, how are our representatives to know the views of those who elected them? And exactly whose job is it to communicate and include what happens at these public meetings with developers? If the answer is staff, they did not do it. If the answer is the developer, either they did not do it or the record is devoid of their report. Either way we are deeply concerned that this is a breach of public trust in our system of governance and should be addressed before decisions are made on this or other projects.
2. Lack of detailed project plans in online packet: It is disturbing that Senate Bill 1214 permits and that the applicant has refused to publicly share his project plans. This is a major step backward for transparency and participatory democracy. We ask that in the future, staff strongly encourage developers to share their project plans with the community that they will impact. Staff should think about what incentives can be offered to encourage developer transparency.

Thank you for listening to our views.

Robert Cox, Louise Katz, Hala Alshahwany, Leslie Friedman, Nazanin Dashtara, Julia Ha, Maureen Blando, Muriel Sivyver-Lee, and Mike Finley

for the Steering Committee of Livable Mountain View