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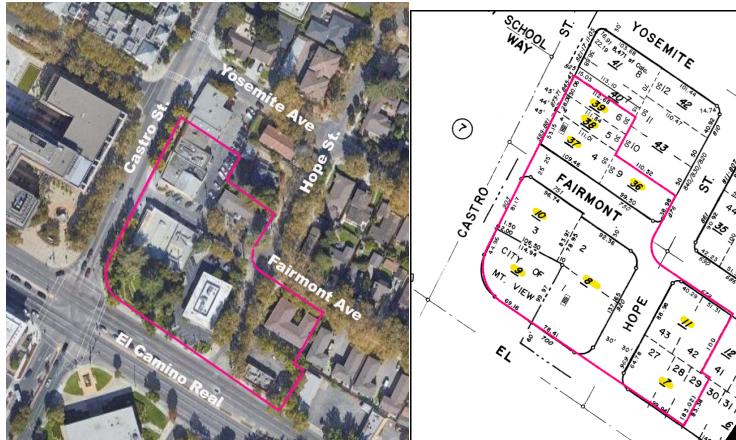
May 17, 2022

City of Mountain View  
Planning Division  
500 Castro Street  
Mountain View, CA 94039

Re: Draft 2023-2031 Housing Element

Dear planning commission members,

We would like to formally request that following addresses be added to the Housing Element updates. We have an informal application before planning staff. Other than ground floor retail the remaining portions of the project on all upper floors are intended to be residential.



969 Hope Street  
920 Hope Street  
679 Fairmont Avenue  
750 Fairmont Avenue  
903 Castro Street  
881 Castro Street  
871 Castro Street  
843 Castro Street

We feel that this primary location with a focus on residential not only benefits the vibrancy of downtown Mountain View but will allow the city to meet its residential growth needs in a timely fashion.

Thank you for your consideration  
Bill Maston  
Principal Architect  
William Maston Architect & Associates

Mario & Liz Ambra

May 17, 2022

Chair William Cranston  
Environmental Planning Commission  
City Hall, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Mountain View, CA 94041  
[epc@moutainview.gov](mailto:epc@moutainview.gov)

Re: Item 5.1 – Housing Element Update  
Draft Sites Inventory List

Dear Chair William Cranston and Planning Commissioners,

We are the owners of one of the properties that was originally designated for residential development in the Sites Inventory for the Housing Element Update.

When the draft Sites Inventory was initially published, we were seven years into a planning process to obtain a General Plan Amendment and rezoning to develop high-density housing on our site. When our General Plan Amendment application was first received, staff had indicated that an R4 designation was appropriate for the site. We struggled, however, to meet what we felt were changing directions on design guidelines and an unwillingness to consider any height incentives or other means to achieve density bonuses if we incorporated affordable housing on-site, something that we were committed to doing.

Early this year, we reached a crossroad with staff. We were on our third round of comments, had paid significant processing and application fees, but more and more money was being asked of us for additional staff time and environmental analysis. We also felt that there was no clear direction on whether the project would receive staff support, whether it would ever be deemed complete, and at what density the site could be developed.

Accordingly, we repeatedly asked for a study session so that we could obtain guidance from City Council on its desired direction. Most recently, we asked for a study session when our site was included on the Draft Inventory List. We were never referred for study session.

Instead, in April, we faced a choice: continue processing the current application under design standards that were making it impossible to achieve the allowable density under R4 zoning or let the application lapse and try again later. Faced with an upcoming bill of more than \$250,000 and significant new design recommendations from staff, we opted to let the application lapse.

We remain interested in pursuing a General Plan Amendment and rezoning to high-density residential. We also hope that the public hearing process and density determinations that are already occurring as part of the Housing Element and Sites Inventory might be a viable route for us to receive clear direction from City Council, such that we could have the confidence to move forward with a new General Plan Amendment and rezoning application.

A site like ours, which is being significantly underutilized and which could be improved to provide 189 new homes<sup>1</sup> with on-site affordable homes and little impact to single-family neighborhoods, is exactly the type of urban infill projects that are needed for the City to meet its RHNA goals and begin solving the housing crisis. Specifically:

- Adding high-density housing to this location is good for the environment.
  - The site is walking distance of the Google campus and could provide much-needed housing for its workforce without generating new vehicle miles traveled
  - It is located right off the Hwy 101 off-ramp such that commuters can easily access the freeway system without sending traffic through local neighborhoods
  - There is already a bus stop directly in front of the site and a new bike lane is being proposed along Rengstorff such that residents could easily access public and alternative, green forms of transportation
- The proposed project would add much-needed housing at all income levels
  - Affordable housing will be provided on-site and will be integrated into the community to provide housing opportunities for people who cannot otherwise afford to live and work in Mountain View
  - No government subsidy would be required to construct the affordable housing, saving taxpayers \$750,000/unit for every affordable housing unit that is built on-site.
  - The project could provide 189 new housing units
- The site is located in an area that will not significantly impact our single-family neighborhoods
  - The site is located across from commercial zoning
  - It is not adjacent to a single-family neighborhood
- The proposed project provides additional community benefits over and above housing:
  - The proposed project would preserve a historic landmark, the original Ambra Olive Oil factory
  - The project would transform an underutilized acre with two homes into a property that would bring significant tax revenue to the City
- The site does not need to go through the Gatekeeper process and we had already made significant headway into the planning process

As you evaluate the Sites Inventory list and advise City Council, we respectfully ask that you consider (1) recommending that we be allowed to present the development potential of our site to Council as part of the Study Session for the Housing Element Update, and (2) recommending that our site be added back into the list at its full development potential of 80 dwelling units/acre before consideration of density

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<sup>1</sup> The site is 1.57 acres and at 80 dwelling units/acre plus a density bonus of 50% if the maximum number of affordable units are incorporated on site, the potential development for this site is 189 units.

bonuses and (3) recommending that the site be proactively rezoned as part the Housing Element Update.

Including a site like ours in the Inventory, which is so well-situated to meet the housing needs of our community, and which is already so far along in the planning process, will do much for the City of Mountain View to meet its housing goals in this upcoming cycle.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mario & Liz Ambra" followed by a long horizontal flourish.

Mario Ambra and Liz Ambra

cc: William Cranston, Chair, [wcranstonmv@gmail.com](mailto:wcranstonmv@gmail.com)  
Joyce Yin, Vice-Chair, [Jyin.mvepc@gmail.com](mailto:Jyin.mvepc@gmail.com)  
Alex Nunex, [alex.nunez@pm.me](mailto:alex.nunez@pm.me)  
Preeti Hehmeyer, [Preeti.hehmeyer@gmail.com](mailto:Preeti.hehmeyer@gmail.com)  
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Jose Gutierrez, [mv.epc.jose@gmail.com](mailto:mv.epc.jose@gmail.com)

**From:** Lenny's Sonic

**Sent:** Tuesday, May 17, 2022 3:58 PM

**To:** wcranstonmv@gmail.com; jyin.mvepc@gmail.com; Chris Clark <chrisclarkmv@gmail.com>; hankdempseymv@gmail.com; mv.epc.jose@gmail.com; preeti.hehmeyer@gmail.com; alex.nunez@pm.me; epcc@mountainview.gov

**Subject:** Housing Element - 5/18/22

Chair Cranston and members of the Environmental Planning Commission:

On the whole, the May 6, 2022 Public Review Draft is an excellent document. It provides valuable data and analysis on housing conditions – qualitative and quantitative – in Mountain View. Pages 59 through 62 provide excellent background on our jobs-housing imbalance and jobs-housing mismatch. Page 96 contains a disturbing report that in academic year 2019-2020 161 public school students in Mountain View experienced homelessness, up from 24 in 2017-2017.

The draft describes Mountain View's generally strong programs for housing our population, with a focus on meeting state mandates. The staff report (page 6) explains that some housing programs, such as the proposed Displacement Response strategy and evaluation of Community Opportunity to Purchase/Tenant Opportunity to Purchase, are not included in the draft Housing Element because they are being addressed through other city processes.

### **Jobs-Housing Imbalance**

While the draft accurately describes Mountain View's jobs-housing imbalance, it suggests little to address it. Not only are there already two jobs in Mountain View for every employed resident, but offices require less land/floorspace. Furthermore, in most case workspaces are developed more quickly than housing. Unless new policies are enacted, we'll fall further behind. In its recent adoption of Precise Plans, Mountain View has attempted to link employment-creating development to commensurate housing construction. But at best those plans will keep the situation from getting much worse.

**Therefore, perhaps the most significant thing Mountain View could do to address our growing housing shortfall is to establish city-wide policies to reduce, or at least keep from increasing, the jobs-housing imbalance.** For example, the Housing Element should establish a policy to identify properties that under current zoning could add substantially to our workforce, but which are suitable for residential development. Those properties should be considered for re-zoning.

For example, the new owner of Charleston Plaza – site of closed Bed Bath & Beyond, REI, and Best Buy – reportedly plans to create a biotech campus there. The city needs to embark upon re-evaluation of that property, now zoned for industrial use, before it's too late.

The old downtown Wells Fargo site is another example. Under the current downtown plan, the Sobrato Organization is proposing a four-story office building, near City Hall, that could provide work space for 500 employees. I've heard that city staff are telling the Council that they must approve the project (on May 24) because it generally complies with the Downtown Precise Plan. It should have already been designated for mixed use.

### **Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing**

The draft's greatest weakness, when compared to state mandates, is its failure to Affirmatively Further Fair Housing. Not only is Mountain View experiencing city-wide declines in our Hispanic/Latinx and Black/African-American populations, but few black and brown people reside in the swath of neighborhoods along our southern boundary. See the maps on pages 116 and 118. There should be a greater push to add affordable housing to the Blossom Valley shopping center, and other south Mountain View housing sites should be identified.

### **Funding Affordable Housing**

The draft document states, "Assembling financing for new construction is consistently challenging for affordable housing developers, though this challenge is not unique to the Mountain View context. In fact, the City of Mountain View routinely provides financing to affordable housing projects to help fill funding gaps." Each project requires several sources of funding.

While this approach leverages, or magnifies, the City's investments, I have learned, as a member of the County's Housing Bond Oversight Committee, that the viability of approved projects is frequently threatened when one source is delayed. Mountain View should work with its public and private partners to develop a pooled funding strategy to overcome weak "links" that arise in the funding "chain."

### **Castro and El Camino**

Finally, I see that the Sites Inventory Map does not highlight the proposed residential development at Castro, El Camino, Hope, and Fairmont. The developer and architect have been meeting with community members in the hope of finalizing a proposal. Shouldn't that be noted? Perhaps the issue is that the footprint is governed by the Downtown Precise Plan, the El Camino Real Precise Plan, and R3.

Lenny Siegel

May 12, 2022

Aarti Shrivastava,  
Community Development Director  
City of Mountain View  
500 Castro St.  
Mountain View, CA 94041

RE: Housing Element Consideration

Dear Ms. Shrivastava,

It is our understanding that staff have been requested to consider modifying the El Camino Medical Park Precise Plan to allow for residential development that could be included in the City's Housing Element plan. El Camino Health requests that you consider the following.

The El Camino Medical Park Precise Plan was originally adopted in 1969. Since that time, there have been several amendments, with the most recent amendment in 2005. From the first writing and throughout the past 52 years the purpose of the El Camino Medical Park Precise Plan was to ensure sufficient land to accommodate growth in quality medical service for the community. El Camino Health has made significant investments to ensure that we continue to provide quality medical services for the community.

The notion of including portions of the El Camino Medical Park Precise Plan Zoning in the Housing Element plan would reverse years of effort and cooperation by El Camino Health to uphold the integrity of the precise plan and the medical needs of the community.

The following perspective comes directly from the El Camino Medical Park Precise Plan Introduction:

*The community goals for this area are:*

- 1. To ensure sufficient land to accommodate growth in quality medical service for the community.*
- 2. To protect the residential character of the surrounding area.*
- 3. To retain and encourage the open and parklike quality of the medical area.*
- 4. To ensure compatibility of the area with Cuesta Park.*
- 5. To ensure compatibility of the area with existing structures within the Medical Park itself.*

*Since this Plan was first adopted, several factors have expanded the Hospital's function and mandated new facilities. Medical and technological advances have required separate specialized outpatient facilities as well as additional space within the Hospital. As new health care and social concerns arise, space is also needed to implement new programs, and as hospitals increasingly compete with each other to provide a broad range of services to more people, hospital facilities will also expand.*

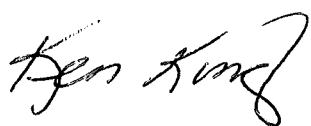
*The residents of Mountain View and the surrounding communities which are served by El Camino Hospital (including Los Altos, Los Altos Hills and Sunnyvale) will benefit from expanded facilities and programs at El Camino Hospital. This Plan is intended to: (1) allow for and anticipate expansion of the Hospital and its related programs and facilities; and (2) to ensure a well-coordinated scheme for the functioning of these activities which respects the surrounding residential neighborhood.*

El Camino Health is committed to providing quality medical services for the community and we do not believe that amending the existing precise plan to allow for residential development within the Medical Park area, will serve the healthcare needs of the community. We have been diligent in our efforts to meet the community goals stated within the Medical Park Precise Plan and while we agree that housing is a significant issue, this should not happen at the expense of meeting the healthcare needs of our community.

Please note also that many of the properties within Zone 'C' of the plan are privately owned and the cost of redevelopment would present a significant challenge for those property owners.

Thank you for your consideration regarding this matter.

Sincerely,

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

Ken King,

Chief Administrative Officer

El Camino Health