

January 4, 2022

William Cranston, Chair
Environmental Planning Commissioners
Environmental Planning Commission
City of Mountain View
500 Castro Street
Mountain View, CA 94039-7540

RE: 555 W. Middlefield Road – Application PL-2017-004 - Request for General Plan Amendment to High-Low Density Residential, a Planned Community Permit and Development Review Permit and Associated Planning Approvals.

Dear Chair Cranston and members of the Environmental Planning Commission:

On behalf of AvalonBay Communities, Inc., I am pleased to provide you the following project information for 555 West Middlefield Road (“the Project”). Our team has worked thoughtfully and collaboratively with city staff, neighbors, residents, and community stakeholders to ensure that this project exemplifies the ideal for new residential development in Mountain View.

We respectfully request that the Environmental Planning Commission support the staff recommendation to recommend City Council approve the project entitlements outlined in the staff report, consistent with the prior direction from the Environmental Planning Commission and City Council study sessions and Design Review Committee hearings on the project.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Application and Submittal History

This site was developed in the late 1960’s and early 1970’s with 402 multi-family residential rental homes. These homes are provided within 15 three-story buildings, and also feature a leasing office and amenity building, and related parking and improvements. In July 2015, the City Council approved the project’s “Gatekeeper” request, citing the fact that the project provided new infill housing, located close to the downtown core, without displacing any current residents.

On July 15, 2016, AvalonBay filed an informal application for Preliminary Review. A formal application was filed on January 3, 2017 (PL-2017-004), and includes a General Plan Amendment, Planned Community Permit, Development Review Permit, Vesting Tentative Parcel Map, Heritage Tree Removal Permit, and associated California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) compliance. The following is a summary of the Project’s application submittal history, staff review, and meetings before the Development Review Committee (DRC), EPC, and City Council:

- Gatekeeper Authorization July 2, 2015
- Application for Preliminary Review July 15, 2016
- Formal Application January 3, 2017
- EPC Study Session #1 March 15, 2017
- City Council Study Session #1 April 18, 2017
- DRC Hearing #1 May 3, 2017
- DRC Hearing #2 July 18, 2018
- EIR Scoping Meeting July 24, 2019
- DRC Hearing #3 March 4, 2020
- EPC Study Session #2 February 9, 2021
- City Council Study Session #2 February 23, 2021
- DRC Hearing #4 October 6, 2021
- FEIR Published October 2021
- Project Designated Complete November 30, 2021

Project Description

The project has been shaped in many ways by the approval process outlined above, and the proposal before you today is the result – an optimal balance that increases the City’s market-rate and affordable the housing stock, preserves all 402 existing rent-controlled apartments, and thoughtfully integrates new and existing buildings, landscaping, and open space.

The proposal is quite detailed, and many aspects of it have been shaped by multiple rounds of feedback from city staff, neighbors, community members, and residents. This is the nature of careful infill development, and reflects the complexity of a development that ensures each existing resident can stay in their home.

555 West Middlefield Road is located less than ½ mile from downtown Mountain View and the Mountain View Caltrain/Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) station. The project proposes the redevelopment of two large, underutilized surface parking lots and adds 323 new multi-family residences to the existing 402 apartment community. The Project would construct the following three buildings, each in a separate phase:

Building A - Amenities Building

Building A will be a new amenity and leasing building for the entire apartment community. This building will be built atop three levels of subterranean parking, which will accommodate 363 parking spaces. In addition to the leasing space, the building will also feature a fitness room, mail/package delivery room, co-working space and a landscaped courtyard deck with a swimming pool, spa, BBQ, and plentiful seating and dining areas.

Building B - 111 Apartments

Building B will be three and four stories tall, and will include 111 new apartments, including 15 on-site affordable homes. The apartments will range from 655 to 1,523 square feet, and consist of studio,

one, two, and three-bedroom units. The affordable units will reflect the range of bedroom types and square footages in the building. The building will be built above a one-story subterranean parking garage, with 167 parking spaces. It also features a rooftop deck and courtyard amenity spaces. Block B will be subdivided to provide for the long-term option of for-sale condominiums.

Building C – 212 Apartments

Building C will be a three- and four-story building with 212 apartments, including 33 affordable units. The apartments range from approximately 539 to 1,478 square feet, and consist of studio, one, two, and three-bedroom homes. Similar to Block B, the affordable units will reflect the range of bedroom types and square footages in building. The building will be built above a two-story subterranean parking garage, with 412 parking spaces. It also features a rooftop deck and courtyard amenity spaces.

Community-Wide Improvements

The proposed project will also construct a dog park for use by the residents, as well as a new public pedestrian and bicycle path from West Middlefield Road to Cypress Point Drive. In addition to the 3.25 acres of common open space on the project site, the project also will dedicate 1.34-acres of land to the city for the design and construction of a new neighborhood public park.

Architecture and Design

Located along West Middlefield Road and Moffett Boulevard, the Project is designed to complement and enhance the existing heavily wooded landscape of the property and surrounding neighborhood. Originally proposed with a more contemporary building design, the architecture has been significantly revised to include traditional residential elements, highlight ground-level unit entries, incorporate upper-floor step-backs, as well as increase building setbacks to address feedback received during study sessions, design review, and community meetings. The proposed mix of traditional residential elements with contemporary design provides for rich architectural variations to scale the project appropriately to the existing residential neighborhood. Particular attention has been paid to the Moffett Boulevard and Cypress Point Drive elevations to ensure a true pedestrian experience with walk-up entries and residential-scale facades.

The top floors of buildings are carefully and strategically stepped back to reduce the verticality of the buildings, and in many areas will entirely hide the fourth story from view for a pedestrian on Cypress Point Drive. Hipped and gabled roofs are employed on both Building B and C to provide an appropriate building termination that is harmonious with neighboring buildings in the area.

Affordable Housing

The initial Project was required to provide 10% on-site affordable units. Over the course of the application review process, the City's Affordable Housing Ordinance was modified to require each residential project provide 15% affordable units. The Project will be providing 48 (15% of the total units) on-site affordable deed-restricted units in perpetuity. The Project will meet a weighted average of 65% AMI. The affordable units will be evenly dispersed with 16 units at 50% AMI, 16 units at 65%

AMI, and 16 units at 80% AMI. These affordable units will be distributed in accordance with the proposed plan approved by the city's community development department's housing division. Affordable units that are appropriate for large families are exceedingly rare in Mountain View, and this project includes many large two-and three-bedroom affordable units.

Public Parks and Open Space

The Project will dedicate a 1.34-acre parcel of land to the city for the design and construction of a new neighborhood public park. The Project will also build a new public pedestrian and bicycle path through the property to connect West Middlefield Road and Cypress Point Drive, and provide 3.25 acres of common open space on site. Furthermore, a contribution of \$2.96 million dollars will be paid to the city in the form of a Park In-Lieu Fee in accordance with City's Parkland Ordinance.

Trees

Over the course of design development and city review, the Project team has evaluated every tree on the property and has taken great care to preserve as many trees as possible. Of the 397 trees that are on the property today, 67% (or 268 trees) will be preserved in place or transplanted on-site. This reflects modifications to the project that have enabled the preservation of an additional 60-trees over what was originally presented at the EPC and City Council study sessions. As described in the staff report, there are specific areas of the site where tree preservation is not possible due to their location in and adjacent to the proposed residential buildings and underground garages. There are 57 Heritage trees that will be removed during construction. Several of these are non-native species which will be replaced with native, climate-appropriate species. All told, the number of trees on-site will increase from 397 to 458.

As part of our community outreach efforts, we have been involved in extensive discussions with neighbors and concerned community members about the area to the east of Building C alongside Highway 85. We have listened intently to these commenters and did an extensive redesign of this area in late 2021 to address their concerns. Although we are forced by the site's dimensions and topography to remove many trees in this area, we will replace these primarily invasive species with a mix of new fast-growing native sycamores and mature transplanted trees from elsewhere on site. The City's environmental consultant and a subsequent City review by professional wildlife biologists have supported the conclusions reached by our arborist and landscape architect – that this new proposed planting plan will increase the ecological benefits of this area and provide a more robust and climate-adaptive environment along the highway. We have also taken the suggestion from the Audubon Society to ensure that all outdoor lighting is shielded and uses only warmer color temperatures (<2700K).

Pedestrian and Bike Amenities

In addition to the new publicly accessible pathway mentioned above, the Project will install a new bike lane along the Moffett Boulevard frontage, in alignment with the City's vision for a Moffett Boulevard that evolves in the coming years to be more pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly. The Project also will install a new eight-foot-wide public sidewalk and a bus boarding island in order to further align with the

City's vision for Moffett Boulevard. The Project will provide ample secure bike storage and bike repair shops within each residential building, as well as bike racks for guests.

Parking and Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Measures

By meeting the City's Model Parking Standard, the Project is designed to accommodate all its parking demand on-site. The Project includes three new below-grade parking garages with 912 spaces, and 58 surface parking spaces, for a total of 970 parking spaces.

A TDM plan is provided as part of the Project, with the goal of making walking, biking, and transit an intuitive first choice for as many new residents as possible. Consistent with other plans recently approved by the City, the TDM plan uses a range of measures to reach its goal of a 10% reduction in car trips. The plan, in conjunction with the site's proximity to the North Bayshore (accessible via the Stevens Creek trail one block away), Moffett, and Whisman job centers and downtown Mountain View, will encourage a large proportion of residents to use alternative transportation methods for their daily commutes.

Sustainability

The Project provides a range of sustainability benefits to residents and the Mountain View community. One of the biggest environmental benefits is the redevelopment of the underutilized, impervious, heat generating asphalt parking lots. The replacement of these parking lots with market rate and affordable housing and increased landscaping and tree plantings will benefit all of Mountain View. The Project will be constructed in compliance the City's REACH Code, which requires all electric buildings, and is designed to meet the LEED Gold standard. The Project also includes electric vehicle charging stations, convenient bicycle amenities, low-flow water fixtures, and native, water efficient landscaping.

Rent Reduction

The City Council asked that a process be established to compensate existing tenants for their temporary loss of amenities and other construction-related impacts. The City of Mountain View's Rental Housing Committee adopted regulations in October, 2021 that provide a process for tenants and landlords to enter into a voluntary agreement to reduce rent for the duration of the impacts, without changing any underlying terms of the tenant's rental contract. AvalonBay has committed to follow this process (which is included in the project's Conditions of Approval), and we will work with City staff in 2022 to develop fair formulas for rent reductions for each home on the property based on the home's specific loss of services and proximity to construction activity.

Community Engagement

The Project has conducted extensive community outreach to identify and address neighborhood and community priorities and concerns. The Project held the following community (mailing radius of 1,000+ ft), neighborhood, existing resident, and community stakeholder meetings in addition to numerous individual meetings and calls with interested residents and community members.

- August 2017 Community Meeting #1
- November 2019 Community Meeting #2
- October 2020 Bay Area Council Housing Committee
- October 2020 Eaves Resident Meeting
- November 2020 Cypress Point Woods and Cypress Point Lakes Neighbor Meeting
- November 2020 Silicon Valley Leadership Group Land Use Committee
- December 2020 Mountain View Chamber of Commerce
- January 2021 SF HAC
- January 2021 MV Yimby
- January 2021 Community Meeting #3
- February 2021 Mountain View Coalition for Sustainable Planning
- October 2021 GreenSpaces MV
- November 2021 Eaves Resident Meeting
- November 2021 Community Meeting #4
- December 2021 Cypress Point Woods and Cypress Point Lakes Neighbor Meeting

PROJECT BENEFITS

Providing New Rental and Affordable Housing, while Preserving 402 Rent-Controlled Units. The redevelopment of two asphalt surface parking lots will allow for the development of 323 new apartment homes, including 48 affordable units. The project is a model for thoughtful and responsive infill residential development – it increases housing near key employment and transit centers, while avoiding displacement of any existing uses. Uniquely, this is the first project in Mountain View to provide new homes at this scale while preserving existing rent-controlled units.

Contributing New Public Open Space. Finding land for new public parks is difficult given high land costs. The Project will dedicate 1.34 acres of land for a new neighborhood public park and pay an additional \$2.96 million dollars in park fees to the city.

Promoting Sustainability. From the buildings' LEED Gold design, to the extensive and thoughtful landscaping and tree preservation, to the step towards making Moffett Boulevard truly walkable and bikeable, this project will promote sustainable development in Mountain View. Locating a significant number of homes in walking proximity to the Mountain View Caltrain station and the downtown core, as well as job centers in North Bayshore, Moffett, and Whisman, is one of the most important elements in modern, sustainable planning.

Providing Community Funding. In addition to all typical residential development impact fees, the Project is offering a voluntary community benefit payment to the city of over \$1.97 million dollars. In addition, we will be making a voluntary monetary contribution beyond the State-mandated SB50 school fees to the local school districts. The project will also substantially increase the property tax basis for this parcel, which will result in higher ongoing property tax payments that will benefit the City and local school districts well into the future.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide this summary of the key components of our project. We want to thank Staff, the Development Review Committee, the Cypress Point neighborhood, and the greater community for working collaboratively with us over the past six years. We respectfully request the EPC approve our project-specific entitlements and send your recommendation to the City Council for approval. We look forward to continuing to work with the city, neighbors, community members and other stakeholders in the community as we move forward.

Very Truly Yours,



Joe Kirchofer
Vice President
Northern California Development
AvalonBay Communities, Inc.

Cc: Aarti Shrivastava, Assistant City Manager / Community Development Director
Stephanie Williams, Planning Manager/Zoning Administrator
Diana Pancholi, Senior Planner

Staff Leadership

Catherine Martineau
Executive Director

Christie Galitsky
Sr. Director of Programs

Shannon McDonald
Operations Director

Maika Horjus
Sr. Development Specialist

Natalie Brubaker
Director of Special Projects

Vanessa Wyns
Education Director

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Geoff Paulsen

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Nancy Peterson

Forest Preston, III

Elizabeth Schwerer

Jeffrey Snyder

Jane Stocklin

Lauren Bonar Swezey

Jennifer Wei

Lanie Wheeler

We envision a day when every resident of the Midpeninsula can step outside to walk, play, and thrive under the shade of healthy trees.

January 4, 2022

City of Mountain View
500 Castro Street
Mountain View, CA 94041

RE: 555 Middlefield Project

Dear City Council and Environmental Planning Commissioners,

We at Canopy wish to express our thanks for your leadership over the past year through the COVID-19 pandemic. We appreciate the work to improve the quality of life for current and future generations. We're writing today to underscore the importance of a healthy tree canopy as an integral part of the development project at 555 W. Middlefield Road. We'd like to echo the community about the importance of moving forward with targeted investments in community resiliency programs and nature-based solutions. Trees—in particular, mature trees—are critically important.

Tree canopy cover provides a multitude of benefits that support community resiliency, sustainability, and harmony with the natural world around us. Trees are our first line of defense against extreme heat, storms, and air and noise pollution. Their shade and beauty promote cardiovascular and respiratory health through various mechanisms such as increased physical activity, as well as positive mental health outcomes, reducing overall health costs in the community. Trees also bring nature into what would otherwise be a concrete jungle, increasing habitat for wildlife. Finally, trees bring people together. Trees can give a neighborhood a distinct identity and point of pride.

While we understand that development projects often necessitate removal of some trees, we urge you to minimize the number of trees lost. Trees take over a decade to mature - as also indicated in the staff report regarding open space and trees; large, mature trees and a continuous canopy provide the most benefits. Native oaks in particular are especially valuable for climate resilience and carbon sequestration, wildlife habitat, and neighborhood character. New plantings should be robust, with native species and locally appropriate drought tolerant non-natives.

We urge the City to require the project developer to:

- Allocate a sufficient 10-year budget to hire reputable, experienced tree professionals to care for, maintain and monitor all the trees at the project site, including the replacement, transplanted and existing trees, in order to ensure their long-term health during and after the construction. This budget would be above and beyond the normal landscaping maintenance budget.
- Preserve as many healthy, mature trees as possible.
- For replacement plantings, use native species, including native oaks, and locally appropriate nonnatives that are climate resilient and robust.

- Ensure the long-term viability and health of all replacement plantings and transplants by following the guidelines in the City's new Tree Technical Manual.
- Provide lush greenspaces to enhance the residents' health and increase biodiversity

It is our hope that city staff and designers will consider the urban forest as an integral element of the 555 W. Middlefield Road project, and each new development project, in order to improve the City's livability, quality of life, sustainability and climate resiliency.

Sincerely,,

Maya Briones (she/her)
Canopy
Advocacy Associate
email: maya@canopy.org
cell: 669-250-4128

From: Corey Smith

Sent: Tuesday, January 4, 2022 11:28 AM

To:

Cc: epc@mountainview.gov; , Planning Division <Planning.Division@mountainview.gov>; cynthia james; Kelsey; Joe Kirchofer

Subject: Petition Signers In Support - 555 W. Middlefield

Members of the Mountain View Environmental Planning Commission,

On behalf of the Housing Action Coalition, Mountain View YIMBY and YIMBY Action, please see the attached list of [petition signers](#) supporting the 555 West Middlefield housing proposal.

Additionally, I've attached the most up to date Letter of Support from the Housing Action Coalition.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Respectfully,
Corey Smith
Deputy Director, HAC

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Corey Smith 陈锐 | Pronouns: He/Him

Deputy Director | Housing Action Coalition

To opt out of all HAC emails, respond to this email with "unsubscribe all".



December 7, 2021

To Whom It May Concern:

The Housing Action Coalition Project Review Committee is pleased to endorse AvalonBay's proposed project at 555 West Middlefield Road in Mountain View. After a detailed presentation by the project team, the Committee determined that this project meets our high standards in urban design, sustainability, and community benefits, and most importantly directly contributes to fighting Mountain View's housing affordability crisis.

The proposed project will provide 323 new infill homes on what is currently a parking lot, as an addition to an existing multifamily development. 48 of these new homes will be designated as affordable units for low to moderate income households, meeting Mountain View's inclusionary requirements. Furthermore, we applaud AvalonBay's efforts to prevent displacement by constructing new units around the existing buildings. We're glad to see that the project will revitalize an existing site into a vibrant community to meet the current needs of the area.

We also appreciate AvalonBay's efforts to consider sustainability. The project anticipates LEED Gold certification and includes all-electric buildings, and their team has centered sustainable transportation options in the urban design. The site is ideally located near major job centers, and is within easy walking distance of downtown Mountain View and a Caltrain/VTA Station. Housing density in this jobs- and transit-rich location will naturally increase public transportation use and shorten commute times, reducing the environmental impact of Mountain View's jobs-housing imbalance. Furthermore, 10% of parking spaces are allocated for electric vehicles, and the project includes a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) program that will reduce single-occupancy driving trips by at least 10%. A new pedestrian and bicycle path and a new city park will also provide new public green space, further encouraging pedestrian and bike-oriented transit.

We commend AvalonBay's work with the community to make this housing blend into the existing and natural surroundings. Their project team worked closely with the neighborhood to consider community design goals, and have committed to providing landscaping and balconies that will enrich the pedestrian experience along Cypress Point Drive.

Ultimately, the Housing Action Coalition Project Review Committee is proud to endorse this project. The new buildings will add thoughtfully considered, well located, and desperately needed homes to Mountain View's housing stock. High density, transit-oriented developments such as this are essential to alleviating Mountain View's housing affordability crisis and reducing the environmental impact of the jobs-housing imbalance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Todd David".

Todd David, *Executive Director*
Housing Action Coalition (HAC)

First name	Last name	Comments	Timestamp (EST)
Mikiko	Yoshida	Excited to have more affordable housing units in Mountain View that are close to public transit!	2021-01-22 15:26:42 EST
Daniel	Murphy	Great proposal for a housing starved community	2021-01-13 13:04:32 EST
Rachel	Gilbert	I am a Mountain View resident who lives just a few blocks away from 555 West Middlefield Road. I strongly support subsidized affordable housing in my neighborhood!	2021-12-13 20:19:40 EST
Paul	Crider	I support this proposal. Mountain View needs more housing!	2021-01-21 23:40:14 EST
Jonas	Mueller Gastell	Please take this chance to do some real good for our community. We face a spiralling affordability crisis and the only way we can combat this is by building more homes.	2021-01-12 18:02:51 EST
Susan	Hamilton	Please we need more housing!!!	2021-12-06 00:36:10 EST
Bruce	England	This housing is well designed and sorely needed for Mountain View. And it's clearly properly scaled with sensitivity to the surrounding community.	2021-02-04 01:34:15 EST
Dylan	O'Connell	This is a fantastic project, and I strongly support it. It's not far from where I live, and I look forward to biking past it in the morning!	2021-12-15 12:46:02 EST
Katariina	Mueller-Gastell	This plot needs to be filled with homes! Please make this amazing development happen for our community.	2021-01-12 18:03:43 EST
Sasha	Zbrozek	We desperately need more housing everywhere in the SFBA. Build build build.	2021-12-06 11:34:45 EST
Chris	Chelberg	We need this housing. This is an opportunity to both provide more homes and sets us up towards fulfilling our RHNA allotment by actually building something.	2021-12-06 22:11:03 EST
Michiko	Scott		2021-12-05 15:02:38 EST
Raayan	Mohtashemi		2021-02-21 22:45:24 EST
Trevor	Wu		2021-12-10 13:21:53 EST
Max	Schwarzer		2021-12-07 22:34:41 EST
Vee	Trairattanapa		2021-12-08 17:56:49 EST
Vee	Trairattanapa		2021-12-08 17:06:25 EST
Nathan	Howard		2021-12-08 02:47:50 EST
Maria	Quigley		2021-12-07 20:10:50 EST
Gabriel	Handford		2021-12-07 17:20:42 EST
Kevin	Ma		2021-12-07 16:56:27 EST
Daniel	Hulse		2021-12-07 16:27:37 EST
David	Watson		2021-12-06 23:21:20 EST
Nathan	Hart		2021-12-06 21:35:14 EST
Eva	Tang		2021-12-06 02:22:48 EST
Salim	Damerdji		2021-12-05 23:59:26 EST

Raiza	Singh	2021-12-05 20:00:14 EST
Paul	Roales	2021-02-08 13:20:13 EST
Daniel	Ray	2021-02-04 19:09:33 EST
Molly	Weiss	2021-01-22 00:39:54 EST
April	Webster	2021-01-21 21:58:20 EST
Jeanine	Crider	2021-01-21 21:08:05 EST
Emily	Ramos	2021-01-14 20:49:20 EST
April	Webster	2021-01-14 02:04:40 EST
Jeremy	Hoffman	2021-01-13 14:50:12 EST
Edward	Swierk	2021-01-12 17:21:07 EST
Devin	Logan	2021-01-12 16:07:44 EST
Ismael	Juma	2021-01-12 16:06:31 EST
Sidharth	Kapur	2021-01-21 23:34:15 EST
Michael	Quinn	2021-12-06 02:58:12 EST
Wesley	Helmholz	2021-12-06 01:22:14 EST
Elizabeth	DeKraai	2021-12-06 01:05:06 EST
William	Thurston	2021-12-06 01:00:05 EST
Kelsey	Banes	2021-01-21 21:58:15 EST
Kelsey	Banes	2021-01-13 17:12:41 EST
Kevin	Watts	2021-01-13 15:57:59 EST
Mike	Dunham	2021-12-06 11:13:12 EST
Evan	Farrar	2021-01-22 00:07:24 EST
Auros	Ansbergs	2021-12-05 15:59:33 EST
Jamee	Webb	2021-12-07 00:16:57 EST
Raul	Maldonado	2021-12-06 13:36:41 EST
Amy	Clark	2021-12-06 01:40:56 EST
Salim	Damerdji	2021-01-21 22:31:33 EST
Corey	Smith	2021-01-11 15:43:40 EST
Cam	Coulter	2021-12-09 23:31:32 EST
Elizabeth	Barcelos	2021-12-06 21:34:49 EST
Anoeil	Odisho	2021-12-06 21:26:58 EST
Alex	Dersh	2021-12-06 00:25:53 EST
Alex	Strange	2021-12-13 08:58:51 EST
Kelly	Wong	2021-01-12 20:03:04 EST
Farid	Sabitov	2021-12-09 22:53:45 EST
Moncef	Kaci	2021-12-08 10:03:13 EST
Micki	Rentauskas	2021-12-07 20:51:10 EST

Abhishek Kumar
Aditya Kumar
Humbert joseph Montiel
☐☐Angie☐☐ Llamas

2021-12-07 15:02:50 EST
2021-12-07 12:23:19 EST
2021-12-06 17:04:53 EST
2021-12-05 22:58:32 EST



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
of the Los Altos-Mountain View Area**

January 3, 2022

Chair Cranston and Members of the Environmental Planning Commission
City of Mountain View
500 Castro Street
Mountain View 94041

Re: EPC Meeting, January 5, Agenda Item 5.2 – 555 W. Middlefield Road

Dear Chair Cranston and Members of the EPC:

The LWV supported the earlier proposal for 555 W. Middlefield, and we support this revised plan. We commend the developer for continuing to consider community feedback and making adjustments including minimizing the impact on the privacy of neighbors and preserving more trees. We are excited to see 323 new housing units as these will create much-needed new housing and help alleviate the jobs/housing imbalance in Mountain View. The site is well-located near downtown, Caltrain, a grocery store and the Stevens Creek trail.

We congratulate the developer for being able to build these new units without any displacement of existing tenants — renovating existing, older apartments as tenants choose to leave. We are pleased to see that the developer's below-market rate (BMR) component is consistent with the City's current BMR requirements.

The 1.34 acres of land dedication for a new park is a welcome addition, as actual parkland is preferable to paying park in-lieu fees. We urge the Council to approve this project.

Thank you for considering our input. (Please send any comments about this letter to Donna Davies at dnndavies@gmail.com).

Karin Bricker, President LWV of Los Altos-Mountain View
Donna Davies Co-Chair, Housing Committee

cc: Wayne Chen Kimbra McCarthy Stephanie Williams Aarti Shrivastava Diana Pacholi



CARPENTERS LOCAL UNION 405

SERVING SANTA CLARA & SAN BENITO COUNTIES

January 4, 2022

Mayor Ellen Kamei, City Council Members and
Environmental Planning Commissioners
City of Mountain View
City Hall
500 Castro Street
P.O. Box 7540
Mountain View, CA 94039-7540

VIA EMAIL: city.council@mountainview.gov and epc@mountainview.gov

Re: Comment on the 555 West Middlefield Road Residential Project Final Environmental Impact Report, Proposed General Plan and General Plan Land Use Map Amendments and Related Permits

Honorable Mayor Kamei, City Council Members and Environmental Planning Commissioners,

Please accept these comments on behalf of the members of Carpenters Local 405, representing thousands of construction workers in Mountain View and Santa Clara County.

As the City of Mountain View considers changing its land use plans to allow for greater densities, there is a need to ensure rezoning that significantly adds to land values also creates equitable development, avoiding an outcome in which benefits accrue solely to developers rather than providing benefits to the community as a whole.

Local 405 is requesting that the City add local hire, apprenticeship and healthcare requirements to the General Plan and Zoning Map Amendments for the proposed 555 West Middlefield Road Project. The standards Local 405 is proposing in this comments letter would help to ensure greater benefits for the broader community from the proposed development and guarantee major new development projects within the City are making needed investments in the region's Skilled Construction Industry Workforce.

The City Should Bar Issuance of Building Permits Unless the Construction of Each Future Development over 20,000 Square Feet has a Viable Apprenticeship Program, Worker Health Coverage Guarantees and Strict Local Hiring Requirements.

The Carpenters propose the following additions to the Municipal Code of the City of Mountain View for all projects larger than 20,000 square feet:

Permitting requirements in the Municipal Code of the City of Mountain View should state:

A person, firm, corporation, or other entity applying for a building permit under the relevant section of the Municipal Code of the City of Mountain View, California shall be required to comply with the following apprenticeship, healthcare and local hire requirements of the 555 West Middlefield Road Residential Project General Plan Amendment. Failure to comply with the requirements set forth in this section shall be deemed a violation of this article.

Apprenticeship:

*For every apprenticeable craft, each general contractor and each subcontractor (at every tier for the project) will sign a certified statement under penalty of perjury that it participates in a Joint Apprenticeship Program Approved by the State of California, Division of Apprenticeship Standards **OR** in an apprenticeship program approved by the State of California Division of Apprenticeship Standards that has a graduation rate of 50% or higher and has graduated at least thirty (30) apprentices each consecutive year for the five (5) years immediately preceding submission of the pre-qualification documents. The contractor or subcontractor will also maintain at least the ratio of apprentices required by California Labor Code section 1777.5.*

Local Hire Policy:

Contractor will be required to provide documentation that the contractor will hire a minimum of twenty-five percent (25%) of staff for any job classification with more than four (4) employees employed whose primary residence, which is not a post office box, is, and has been, within the Counties of Santa Clara or San Mateo within 180 days of the expected date of issuance of the Notice to Proceed for the project.

Healthcare:

*Contractor (at every tier for the project) shall sign a statement stipulating to and providing documented proof that the contractor provides medical coverage for all of its construction craft employees during periods of employment and that the contractor has maintained such medical coverage in good standing for 180 consecutive days immediately prior to the submission of the pre-qualification documents (a copy of the Declaration of Insurance Coverage showing the dates of continuous coverage or proof that the Contractor contributes to an Employee Benefit Plan shall qualify) **OR** documentary proof that the contractor has offered such medical coverage to its employees within 180 consecutive days immediately prior to the submission of the pre-qualification documents. Any change in coverage must be immediately provided to the City of Mountain View.*

Investing in Our Community

Requiring largescale development projects to include investments in a Skilled Construction Workforce is in keeping with the City's General Plan vision of advancing sustainable and innovative development that addresses the needs of all residents.

While there has been a remarkable economic expansion in Mountain View since 2010, the jobs-housing imbalance adds to the City's affordability crisis. The City's General Plan calls for development that promotes diversity and seeks to create housing opportunities for residents at all income levels.ⁱ Policies that require the utilization of apprentices and a local construction workforce, in tandem with programs currently operated by Local 405 that are outlined below, will help the City address the jobs/housing imbalance and meet its development goals.

Adopting local hire requirements that mandate a percentage of the construction workforce employed on major new development projects is drawn from the area would generate economic opportunities for the community by 1) providing employment to local residents and 2) ensuring money invested in new development in the form of wages is spent locally by workers who live in the area.

In addition, local hire supports the City's General Plan goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissionsⁱⁱ by minimizing local vehicle trips thereby lowering the impact of workers commuting to job sites.

Innovation

To ensure the region is able to maintain its local construction trades workforce, South Bay communities also should require developers to commit to doing their part to sustain a steady pipeline of projects that offer apprenticeship opportunities.

Joint Apprenticeship Training Committees (JATC's), such as the Carpenters Training Committee for Northern California (CTCNC), are a proven method of career training built around strong and innovative partnerships between employers, training programs and the government. This tripartite system is financially beneficial not only for the apprentice, but it is also a major benefit for the employer and the overall economy of Mountain View.

Through their embrace of new technologies and delivery systems, these programs have a significant impact on the construction industry, particularly the residential sector. Increasing housing delivery methods reduces project durations and provides Mountain View residents housing sooner. Local 405 is at the forefront of ensuring that new construction technologies deliver those benefits while creating work opportunities for those already in the trades as well as those looking to begin a construction career. These technologies could help the City meet its housing goals within the General Plan.

Sustaining and Expanding Career Pipelines

Joint Apprenticeship Training Committees monitor current market conditions and adjust the workflow of apprentices to meet the needs of the community, heading off any shortage of skilled workers. History has demonstrated that strong utilization of apprentices throughout the private sector helped California builders produce millions of units of housing.

The South Bay region as a whole has a dire need for more trained construction workers. The California Employment Development Department (EDD) projects that between now and 2028, there will be 53,000 South Bay job openings in the Construction Trades. This demand is

the result of new job growth and workers exiting the industry or transferring out of jobs in the South Bay.ⁱⁱⁱ

The EDD's projections do not take into account the state's Regional Housing Needs Allocation for increased housing production in the Bay Area. In 2020, the state's Housing and Community Development Department determined that more than 440,000 units of housing are required to be built in the region,^{iv} an increase of 260,000 units from the previous assessment.^v Mountain View's share of that total was assessed by the Bay Area's regional planning agency to be more than 11,000 units.^{vi}

Competition for skilled construction labor in the region is already fierce and includes public capital projects that mandate prevailing wages, Project Labor Agreements such as the VTA Bart Silicon Valley II Extension and other major upcoming projects in the region such as the San Jose Downtown West Plan.

Projects that pay prevailing wages and/or offer Community Workforce Agreements are able to draw the most skilled and experienced of the construction workforce. Mountain View projects could be delayed or become more expensive if contractors' labor standards are not competitive.

Joint employer-labor apprenticeship programs such as the CTCNC are already working to meet the region's need for trained construction trades workers. At the start of this year, there were 4,683 active Building Trades apprentices in San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties.

These apprentices represent more than 8% of the current Construction Trades Workforce in Santa Clara and San Mateo and they represent the future ranks of skilled trades workers in the region.^{vii} Joint-Labor Management programs funded by a Department of Labor-regulated employee benefit trust are responsible for training the vast majority of these new trades men and women; over 97% of all current apprentices in the region are learning their craft in a JATC program.

Advancing Equity

CTCNC recruitment strategies would aid the City in meeting equity goals through robust diversity and inclusionary outreach programs, such as pre-apprenticeship, with proven results in creating representative workplaces and helping build strong local economies.

Joint Apprenticeship Training Committees (JATC's), such as the Carpenters Training Committee for Northern California (CTCNC), train more than 98% of women, Asian Pacific Islander and African American apprentices that are currently enrolled and actively engaged in trades apprenticeship training programs in the two counties.

For these programs to continue to build on this success, it is imperative that underserved populations have supportive and effective pathways to viable construction careers, while ensuring that employers are able to find and develop the best and brightest talent needed to thrive in a competitive economy.

Finally, the City of Mountain View should consider making these commitments to training and healthcare as an investment in the health and well-being of our community.

Employer-paid health insurance plans for our members and their families provide preventative services to stay healthy and prevent serious illness. Fewer than 1 in 3 California construction workers report having health insurance through their own employers or unions, compared to almost 1/2 of all California workers. And California construction workers are close to 3 times more likely to not have access to any health care insurance coverage (via an employer or a family member's plan or any other type of coverage) than other workers in the state.^{viii}

Timely care helps maintain the community's health as a whole, reduces the fiscal burden for our members and their families, and would significantly reduce the utilization of safety-net programs administered by Mountain View and Santa Clara County.

Promoting apprenticeship program participation also would help to ensure workers building new housing in Mountain View have the opportunity to access housing opportunities of their own. More than half of Construction Trades households in San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties are at or below the Low Income and Very Low Income AMI income bands,^{ix} meaning they qualify for affordable housing.^x Apprenticeships have been found to boost US construction workers' lifetime career incomes by \$240,000;^{xi} improved lifetime wage levels could enable more of the workforce to remain in the region.

In conclusion, Local 405 urges the City of Mountain View to adopt the proposed requirements. Mandatory local hire and apprenticeship requirement would help the City ensure the 555 W. Middlefield Residential Project better meets the goals of the Mountain View General Plan. A local hire policy is a critical part of sustainable building and development, while also minimizing vehicle trips and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Apprenticeship utilization will ensure an adequate skilled workforce to meet the City's housing goals.

Carpenters Local 405 looks forward to working with the City and its staff as you consider this and a number of other major development plans currently undergoing review in Mountain View. Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns or need any additional information.

Sincerely,



Samuel Munoz
Senior Field Representative

ⁱ City of Mountain View [2030 General Plan](#).

ⁱⁱ Ibid.

ⁱⁱⁱ [CA EDD Projected Long-Term Occupational Data 47-0000 Construction and Extraction Occupations](#) San Jose-Sunnyvale-Santa Clara, 2018-2028.

^{iv} California Department of Housing and Community Development, [Association of Bay Area Governments Final Regional Housing Determination](#), June 9, 2020.

^v California Department of Housing and Community Development, [Association of Bay Area Governments Association of Bay Area Governments Regional Housing Need Determination for Housing Element Updates](#), February 24, 2011.

^{vi} [Letter to Dave Vautin, Assistant Director Major Plans, Bay Area Metro re: Draft Plan Bay Area and Regional Housing Needs Allocation](#), Mountain View Office of the City Manager, July 2, 2021.

^{vii} US Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2018 data, Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties, Construction Occupations.

^{viii} U.S. Census, ASEC of the CPS, 2019-2021, [Custom Table](#).

^{ix} Statistic calculated from the [MetroSight "HOPE Tool,"](#) based on U.S. Census ACS 2015-2019 microdata.

^x [Income Limits](#), California Department of Housing and Community Development.

^{xi} [Mathematica 2012](#).

From: Rick Gosalvez

Sent: Thursday, December 23, 2021 12:41 PM

To: epc@mountainview.gov

Cc: David Meyer; Pancholi, Diana; City Clerk; Chen, Wayne

Subject: SV@Home Comment RE: EPC Item 5.2 - 555 West Middlefield Road Residential Project (Jan 5, 2022)

Dear Chair Cranston and Commissioners Capriles, Dempsey, Gutierrez, Hehmeyer, Nunez, and Yin,

Re: Item 5.2 - 555 W. Middlefield Road Residential Project

SV@Home writes today in support of staff's recommendation to advance AvalonBay Communities' proposed residential development at 555 W Middlefield Road.

The development's planned mix of on-site affordable units located throughout the project will help many families at a wide range of income levels, **from \$55,300 annually up to \$100,950**, continue to make Mountain View their home. In fact, the proposed 323-unit project, with 48 new deed-restricted affordable homes, would provide desperately needed housing options for Mountain View residents looking for housing solutions.

The development, which currently houses 402 families, would not displace residents but rather expand Mountain View's housing inventory for very low, low, and moderate-income residents in perpetuity, making it a community asset for years to come.

AvalonBay has actively engaged the community and demonstrated its commitment to working with residents by incorporating feedback into the project plan including parking, height, and design considerations. Recent collaborative efforts resulted in a new 1.34-acre public park as well as updates to the landscaping plan to better integrate existing habitat and heritage trees, which will preserve 228 trees and transplant 40 trees, increasing canopy coverage by a 3rd of an acre across the site.

Mountain View is a housing leader whose housing-centered land use plans and inclusionary zoning requirements incentivize affordable housing. **This project is an example of those initiatives at work.**

We thank you for your leadership and urge the Commission to support staff's recommendation to move this project forward without delay.

Sincerely,

Rick Gosalvez

Housing Production Senior Assoc.

350 W Julian St. #5, San Jose, CA 95110



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Jennifer Loving
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Mary Murtagh
EAH Housing

Chris Neale
The Core Companies

Kelly Snider
Kelly Snider Consulting

Staff
Regina Celestin Williams
Executive Director

TRANSMITTED VIA EMAIL

December 21, 2021

Environmental Planning Commission
City of Mountain View
500 Castro St, Mountain View, CA 94041

Dear Chair Cranston and Commissioners Capriles, Dempsey, Gutierrez, Hehmeyer, Nunez, and Yin,

Re: Item 5.2 - 555 W. Middlefield Road Residential Project

SV@Home writes today in support of staff's recommendation to advance AvalonBay Communities' proposed residential development at 555 W Middlefield Road.

The development's planned mix of on-site affordable units located throughout the project will help many families at a wide range of income levels, **from \$55,300 annually up to \$100,950**, continue to make Mountain View their home. In fact, the proposed 323-unit project, with 48 new deed-restricted affordable homes, would provide desperately needed housing options for Mountain View residents looking for housing solutions.

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We thank you for your leadership and urge the Commission to support staff's recommendation to move this project forward without delay.

Sincerely,



Regina Celestin Williams
Executive Director



SILICON VALLEY
LEADERSHIP GROUP

2001 Gateway Place, Suite 101E
San Jose, California 95110

Est. in 1978 by
David Packard

(408) 501-7864

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Rao Mulpuri
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Kim Polese
CrowdSmart

Ryan Popple
Protterra

Sharon Ryan
Bay Area News Group

Tom Werner
SunPower

December 23, 2021

Environmental Planning Commission
City of Mountain View
500 Castro Street
Mountain View CA 94041

RE: Support for Development Proposal at 555 W. Middlefield Road, Mountain View, California 94043

Dear Chair Cranston, Vice Chair Lo, and Commissioners Capriles, Dempsey, Hehmeyer, Nunez, and Yin,

The Silicon Valley Leadership Group is proud to support the preservation of the existing 402 units and addition of 323 new homes proposed by AvalonBay Communities, Inc. at the 555 West Middlefield Road site.

The Silicon Valley Leadership Group is driven by more than 350 member companies to proactively tackle issues to improve our communities and strengthen our economy, with a focus on education, energy, the environment, health care, housing, tax policy, tech & innovation policy and transportation. Among the top concerns of our members is a need for housing affordable for all incomes here in the Bay Area.

At present, we are in a dire housing supply shortage across Silicon Valley. Dense housing on scarce land is one of the most effective solutions we have to combatting this crisis. The solutions are clear: we need to produce more housing, while preserving existing housing, especially affordable housing. This development proposal does both. It protects the existing 402 units, while adding more housing including new affordable housing on-site. Not only does the AvalonBay proposal accomplish two of the three "P's", production and preservation, it does it in the right place.

Additionally, this development is convenient to public transit, located one-half of a mile from the Mountain View Caltrain Station and the adjacent downtown business district. The convenient location allows future residents the opportunity to commute easily via Caltrain as well as bike or walk to numerous local restaurants and shops

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,

Vincent Rocha
Senior Director of Housing and Community Development
Silicon Valley Leadership Group



August 12, 2021

Diana Pancholi, Project Planner
Community Development
City of Mountain View
Via email to: diana.pancholi@mountainview.gov

RE: Comments on the DEIR for 555 W. Middlefield

The Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter Sustainable Land Use Committee and the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society appreciate the opportunity to provide comments on this proposed development. We are generally supportive of increasing density using infill and we consider added housing, in proximity to transit, as desirable. However, this should not be at the expense of seriously degrading the environment. We believe that the “No Block C” alternative provides a reasonable balance of housing and environmental impact.

555 Middlefield is proposing to add housing in 3 different locations, using existing surface parking lots to insert additional housing with multi-level underground parking.

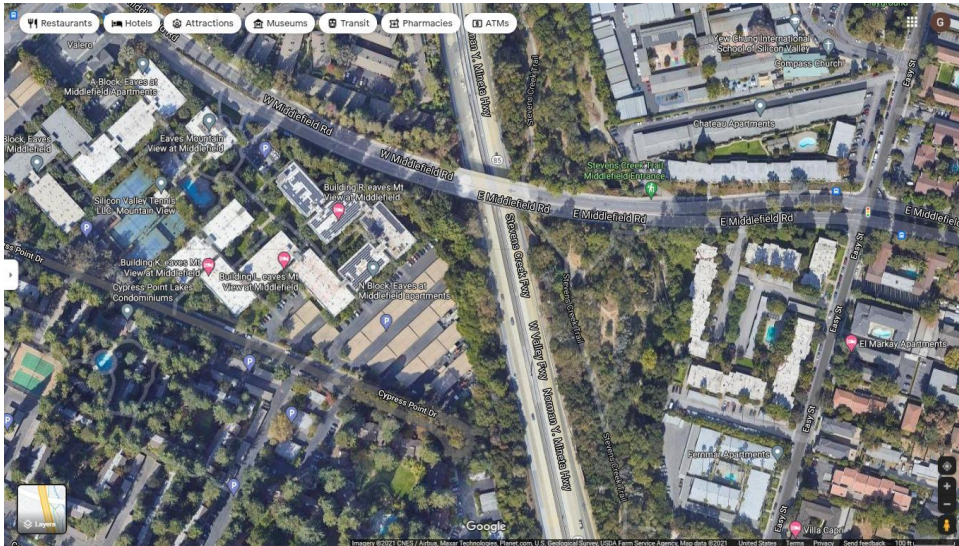
Block “C,” however, is very problematic as it has serious impacts. The proposed development here involves removal of every single tree in the existing wide tree buffer that currently exists along Hwy 85 and in close proximity to Stevens Creek Trail. This canopy is part of the unique Stevens Creek habitat corridor that extends from the Bay to the hills.

The 80’-100’ wide existing urban canopy will be lost to make place for a four-story building near Hwy 85 along with a strip of new landscaping including a few relocated olive trees.

We are strongly opposed to degradation of the urban canopy along the habitat corridor and the removal of so many trees. We support the alternative of “No Block C” because we oppose removal of the urban canopy along Hwy 85.

The existing landscaping provides an effective aesthetic barrier to Hwy 85 visually and as a barrier for freeway noise. It also helps to trap airborne toxics, such as particulates from auto exhaust and tire dust, and brake linings dust from the highway. This is important because there is clear evidence of increased incidence and severity of health problems associated with air pollution exposures related to proximity to roadway traffic.

In addition, the tree canopy is part of an important unique habitat corridor, along Stevens Creek, from the Bay to the hills. Many resident and migratory bird species, as well as mammals, including bats, amphibian life and insect pollinators, use this corridor to travel between rich habitat patches.



View showing Stevens Creek Habitat Corridor at the site along Hwy 85.



Typical view of existing tree canopy along Hwy 85, seen from the site, part of a critical habitat corridor extending from the Bay to the hills. The project proposes clear cutting of all the trees along Hwy 85 to make room for a new building close to Hwy 85.



Excerpt from Drawing L.003 'Tree Removal Plan': Green hatched area shows ALL the trees along Hwy 85, on the property, are to be clear cut to make place for new buildings. Blue numbers are heritage trees, black numbers are non-heritage, and shrubs to be removed are not documented

Stevens Creek Corridor Park

Stevens Creek is a 20-mile-long waterway that starts on the slopes of Black Mountain in the Santa Cruz Mountains and flows to the Bay.

The 4.8-mile Stevens Creek Trail, which intermittently follows along the banks of Stevens Creek, is one of the best-developed and most ambitious trails in the Bay Area. The existing trail cost around \$30 million to build, with funding from a wide range of public and private sources. Building the trail required the construction of several bridges and underpasses, the planting of thousands of trees and shrubs, and the installation of numerous amenities, such as benches, signs, and drinking fountains. Since then, many other funding sources have been utilized to fund improving the ecology of the trail and the creek, and to protect biodiversity.

Because of the extensive landscaping and amenities, the trail acts as a natural linear park and is one of the peninsula's unique habitat corridors connecting the Bay to the hills.

The Stevens Creek corridor connects several rich habitat areas, home to a variety of both aquatic and land-based wildlife¹. Some species found in the parks include:

- **Mammals:** Coyote, Gray Fox, Raccoon, Brush Rabbit, Merriam's Chipmunk, Fox Squirrel, Opossum, black-tailed deer, and Big brown bat.
- **Birds:** the parks and trail are great for bird watching, with over 150 different species;

¹ SF Bay Wildlife https://www.sfbaywildlife.info/places/stevens_creek_county_park.htm

- **Butterflies:** California Sister, Lorquin's Admiral, Variable Checkerspot, Northern Checkerspot, Mylitta Crescent, Unsilvered Fritillary, Sara Orangetip, Gray-veined White, Painted Lady, Mournful Duskywing, Echo Blue, Spring Azure, Umber Skipper, Tailed Copper;
- **Dragonflies/Damselflies:** Flame Skimmer, Red Rock Skimmer, Common Green Darner, Variegated Meadowhawk, Vivid Dancer, Familiar Bluet;
- Other **invertebrates** worth mentioning are California Forest Scorpion and Banana Slug.

The Stevens Creek habitat corridor connects park habitats along different areas of Stevens Creek, enabling bird, mammal, and insect migration, (re)colonization and breeding opportunities for flora and fauna, and promoting increased genetic diversity. It provides food and shelter for a variety of wildlife and helps with juvenile dispersal and seasonal migrations. We believe that as proposed, the project is likely to interfere substantially with the movement of wildlife species in this corridor.

Summary

We support the alternative of "No Block C" as we oppose removal of the urban canopy along Hwy 85 for all the reasons given above.

In addition, increased density should come with some positive benefits for the community. We would propose actually improving the tree buffer and urban canopy along Hwy 85 by augmenting with more trees, using California natives selected for resistance to highway impacts, to improve the habitat value and add to Mountain View's urban greening efforts.

This will improve the livability of the project for residents, including better health effects due to an improved buffer for auto exhaust, toxic dust and noise from the freeway, and a better aesthetic experience.

Importantly, it will advance Mountain View's strategic goal for improved biodiversity. In addition, added trees contribute to urban cooling, ameliorating climate change and urban heat island effects, and provide more carbon sequestration and better management of stormwater.

Respectfully submitted,



Gita Dev, Co-Chair
Sustainable Land Use Committee
Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter



Shani Kleinhaus
Environmental Advocate
Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society

CC

Mountain View City Council
Gladwyn D'Souza, Conservation Chair, Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter (SCLP)
James Eggers, Executive Director, Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter (SCLP)
Rajiv Mathur, Friends of Stevens Creek <rajiv_mathur@stevenscreektrail.org>

COMMENTS ON IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES: DEIR 555 WEST MIDDLEFIELD ROAD,
MOUNTAIN VIEW

1. The Project would result in the significant and unavoidable impacts with respect to Project and cumulative PM2.5 concentrations at existing on-site sensitive receptors.

CEQA requires mitigation for impacts, even when mitigation does not reduce the impacts to below significance level. The mitigations offered for Impact AQ-2b are limited to construction activities, and do not address the impact associated with the loss of tree canopy buffer along Hwy 85.

Scientific evidence shows that urban trees remove fine particulate air pollution². The removal of the trees along Hwy 85 eliminates an important green infrastructure service that can help reduce PM2.5 concentrations not only during construction, but also for the operations lifetime of the project. The Project should be modified in a way that retains all the existing trees along the freeway (eliminating Block "C," for example).

2. The Project finds no significant impact to Aesthetic Resources. We disagree.

Hwy 85 is not considered a scenic highway at the state level, but thousands of drivers spend several hours each week on this roadway on their way to and from work at Silicon Valley companies³. The value of the tree-lined highway in this section is not negligible - seeing trees

2

United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). 2017. Our nation's air: Status and trends through 2016. Accessed October 2020.

Nowak, D.J., D.E. Crane, and J.C. Stevens. 2006. Air pollution removal by urban trees and shrubs in the United States. *Urban Forestry and Urban Greening* 4:115–123.

Smith, W. H. 1990. *Air pollution and forests*. New York: Springer-Verlag, 618 p.

Nowak, D.J., S. Hirabayashi, A. Bodine and R. Hoehn. 2013. Modeled PM2.5 removal by trees in ten U.S. cities and associated health effects. *Environmental Pollution* 178: 395–402.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). 2012. *Asthma in the U.S: Growing every year*. Accessed October 2020.

³ "Gloomy forecasts abound with traffic experts predicting severe congestion on all South Bay roads to return in a very short time despite the opening of Highway 85. Anywhere from 100,000 to 150,000 vehicles are expected to use the freeway each weekday."
<https://www.mercurynews.com/2014/10/17/from-the-archives-highway-85-debuts-with-a-surprise/> (2014)
and

<https://dot.ca.gov/-/media/dot-media/programs/traffic-operations/documents/census/aadt/tc-2016-aadt-volumes-a11y.pdf>

improves mental health, cognition, and productivity for these drivers⁴. Indeed, studies show that people who commute through natural environments daily report better mental health, and this association is even stronger among active commuters⁵. The project replacement trees will take decades to grow to provide the aesthetic and health benefits that the existing trees provide.

Trees (and the urban forest) are also important to community health. The loss of the trees along Hwy 85 should be recognized as a significant, unavoidable impact to the environment and the health of residents and drivers alike. This impact can be avoided if the “No Block C” alternative is adopted, or another configuration is offered that retains the existing trees along the freeway.

Views from Hwy 85,
looking towards the
project site:



4

Urban trees and human health (a scoping review):
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7345658/>

Effects of nature on cognitive functioning, emotional well-being, and other dimensions of mental health:
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6656547/>

Effects of trees on academic success: <https://aslathedirt.files.wordpress.com/2016/01/li-sullivan.pdf>

Nature conservancy benefits of urban trees:
https://www.nature.org/content/dam/tnc/nature/en/documents/Public_Health_Benefits_Urban_Trees_FIN_AL.pdf

Urban forests and climate change (discusses benefits of urban forests to physical and mental health):
<https://www.fs.usda.gov/ccrc/topics/urban-forests> and

Effects of vegetation on reducing frustration levels for drivers:
<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0013916503256267>

⁵ <https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2018/10/181018095349.htm>



3. Biological impacts must address and mitigate the impacts of nighttime lighting on human health and on the Stevens Creek riparian ecosystem.

Artificial Light at Night (ALAN) is an emerging global environmental concern, and light pollution is an under-recognized problem. In recent years, there has been a remarkable increase in scientific articles showing devastating effects of ALAN on species and ecosystems⁶, and on human health.

The most devastating ecological impacts have been on insects and insect populations, including aquatic insects⁷, and the ecosystems that depend on insects for pollination, or as a food source. Because the project site is so close to Stevens Creek, attracting aquatic insects to light can cause adverse impacts to the aquatic and riparian ecosystem of the Creek.

Outdoor lighting has also been implicated in adverse impacts to teen mental health⁸ and to human physical health, including thyroid cancer and sleeping disorders⁹.

The International Dark-sky Association provides sound recommendations for addressing light pollution¹⁰ including:

- Shield lights and direct light downward;
- Use only as much light as needed;
- Use light only when necessary;
- Install control systems such as dimmers, motion sensors, and timers;
- Light close to ground;

⁶ "Exposure to Artificial Light at Night and the Consequences for Flora, Fauna, and Ecosystems" - an in depth summary of how ALAN affects the natural world:

<https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fnins.2020.602796/full>.

⁷ <https://www.sciencemag.org/news/2021/05/can-scientists-help-insects-survive-their-fatal-attraction-light-night>

⁸ <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/news/science-news/2020/outdoor-light-linked-with-teens-sleep-and-mental-health>

⁹ <https://acsjournals.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1002/cncr.33392> and <https://time.com/5033099/light-pollution-health/>.

¹⁰ <https://www.darksky.org>

- Prevent light spillage.¹¹

In addition, please limit the Correlated Color Temperature (CCT) of all lights to warmer light - no more than 2400 Kelvin within 300-ft of a riparian corridor, and no more than 2700 Kelvin throughout the Project. The reason is that LED lighting >2400 Kelvin is associated with pervasive negative impacts on humans, wildlife, and ecosystems¹².

4. Plant and tree palette

The City of Mountain View has adopted a strategic plan that prioritizes biodiversity in the City¹³. To support biodiversity, mature trees (especially oaks) should be retained, especially in areas where they function as a wildlife movement corridor (along Hwy 85). In addition, a native plant palette would support native fauna and flora, especially local birds, and pollinators.

Almost all the species in the plant palette for the Project are not native to California and to our region and the vast majority has no habitat value beyond providing some structure.

Trees

There are no California native trees in the plan! The only oak, holly oak, is a species that provides no habitat value. Even the redbud is the eastern, rather than western, redbud. Some of the species on the list should not be planted here. For example, in California, London plane trees tend to hybridize with local sycamores in riparian corridors, threatening the genetic integrity of the local population.¹⁴

The plan should be revised to use trees from the North Bayshore plant palette¹⁵, even where the chosen non-native is consistent with existing trees onsite. This will result in less consistency visually, but much higher biodiversity value, which is a key priority of the City.

Shrubs

The plan is predominantly non-native despite the fact that California is blessed with an extensive diversity of native shrubs that are drought tolerant, aesthetically lovely, and provide habitat and biodiversity value. The North Bayshore plant palette provides many options.

¹¹ <https://www.iau.org/static/publications/dgskies-book-29-12-20.pdf>

¹² 2021 A Values-Centered Approach to Nighttime Conservation <https://www.darksky.org/values-centered-lighting-resolution/>

¹³ https://www.mountainview.gov/council/strategic_planning_and_visioning.asp

Strategic plan FY 2021-23 pg. 2 Protect and enhance local ecosystems and biodiversity through rewilding and other measures.; and pg. 3 Define biodiversity requirements for landscaping in Mountain View.

¹⁴ [https://www.valleywater.org/sites/default/files/D2%20-%20Sycamore Alluvial Woodland Planting Guide 08 30 2018 med res.pdf](https://www.valleywater.org/sites/default/files/D2%20-%20Sycamore%20Alluvial%20Woodland%20Planting%20Guide%2008%2030%202018%20med%20res.pdf)

O'Rourke, S.M. and M.R. Miller. 2017. RAD sequencing identifies trees that are a product of hybridization between California sycamore (*Platanus racemosa*) and London planetree (*Platanus x acerifolia*). Department of Animal Science, University of California, Davis.

¹⁵ https://www.mountainview.gov/depts/comdev/planning/activeprojects/northbayshore_/default.asp

The plan should be revised to replace most of the shrubs with natives in accordance with the City priority for improving biodiversity.

The landscaping plan allows “minor planting revisions [to] occur during working drawings development, due to architecture and site plan refinements, irrigation design and/or plant material availability.” All the plants should be selected from the North Bayshore plant palette with no substitution.

4. Biological Resources: nesting birds

Large trees near waterways are often used by nesting birds, including raptors such as the Red-shouldered hawk, Great-horned owl, and Red-tailed hawk¹⁶. The nesting season for large birds is longer, and thus a nesting raptor survey is needed for the trees along Hwy 85 in the months of January through September.

5. Energy

Net Zero Energy

Mountain View’s Climate Action Plan (CAP) requires the City to move towards electrification to reduce GHG emissions. We note that some of the existing buildings have solar panels on their roofs. However, the proposed development does not include rooftop solar and the roof design may possibly preclude rooftop solar.

In order to achieve the City’s Climate Action goals, proposed new development should be encouraged to be Net Zero energy for new construction and include rooftop solar.

EV Charging Stations

This project will be operational for the next 50 years and climate change is driving the movement from gas powered vehicles to electric powered vehicles. By setting a course to end sales of internal combustion passenger vehicles by 2035, the Governor’s Executive Order established a target for the transportation sector that helps put the state on a path to carbon neutrality by 2045.

We believe more EV charging stations are needed than the 10% currently proposed. The project should provide closer to 25% charging stations or include documented capacity for easily expanding the number of charging stations to 25% within the next decade¹⁷.

6. Transportation

Parking and Car Share

¹⁶ Breeding Bird Atlas of Santa Clara County (Bill Bousman, Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society, 2007)

¹⁷ A study by the [National Renewable Energy Laboratory](#) estimates that 3.4 DCFC, and 40 Level 2 charging ports are needed per 1,000 EVs. Assuming [35 million EVs by 2030](#), the U.S. will need to build about 50,000 DCFCs and 1.2 million Level 2 ports. This means that 380 EV charging ports will need to be installed each day over the next nine years. In comparison, the U.S. has installed on average about [30 ports a day](#) between 2010 and 2020.

The parking ratio is difficult to determine as it is not clear from the documents whether the parking count includes the parking spaces that will be replaced by the new construction.

The DEIR documents indicate 997 parking spaces (there may be a math error in the DEIR which lists 987 spaces) including garage spaces and surface parking. This yields a parking ratio of 1.37 spaces per unit. These numbers need to be clarified to explain whether existing spaces are included in this count or excluded.

A parking ratio of 1 space per unit should be the maximum for a transit-oriented housing development in order to encourage transit use. Please clarify the parking count of existing versus new parking spaces.

Car Share, in addition, is a critical element in making it convenient to have access to a car when transit is not available. The number of Car Share spaces is not listed anywhere. Since this is a critical element in the parking design, the proposed number of car share spaces needs to be part of the development proposal. Please include the minimum number of Car Share units that will be included even though the TDM plan is not part of the DEIR.

7. Noise

Green space has the ability to mitigate noise in urban areas. Planting "noise buffers" composed of trees and shrubs can reduce noise by five to ten decibels for every 30m width of woodland, especially sharp tones, and this reduces noise to the human ear by approximately 50%¹⁸.

For this reason, with the intensification of development on this site, the tree buffer along Hwy 85 is an important element that needs to be preserved and augmented. We recommend improving the tree buffer and urban canopy along Hwy 85, by augmenting with more trees, using California natives selected for resistance to highway impacts, to improve the habitat value and add to Mountain View's Urban Greening efforts.

8. Alternatives

The EIR suggests that the "No Block C" alternative would have "similar but slightly lesser" environmental impacts for most resource topics (particularly air quality, greenhouse gas emissions, noise, and traffic) because of the reduced scale of the alternative compared with the Project, although there would be no change in the impact conclusion for any of the foregoing resource areas.

Based on the evidence provided above, we believe we have a fair argument showing that the "No Block C" alternative reduces aesthetic and air pollution impacts and improves noise impacts enough to provide additional housing while balancing environmental considerations and the need for housing.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the DEIR.

¹⁸<https://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/tools-and-resources/fthr/urban-regeneration-and-greenspace-partnership/greenspace-in-practice/benefits-of-greenspace/noise-abatement/>

From: Daniel Shane
Sent: Sunday, January 2, 2022 8:58 PM
To: epc@mountainview.gov
Cc: EPC Commissioners
Subject: Scientific Research on the Health Benefits of Urban Forests and Tree Canopies

See below.

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

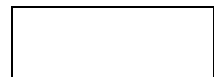
From: Daniel Shane
Date: January 2, 2022 at 3:19:25 PM PST
To: Robert Cox
Cc: Leona Chu, Diane Gazzano, Toni Rath, Jerry Steach, Hala Alshahwany
Subject: Scientific Research on the Health Benefits of Urban Forests and Tree Canopies

This may help support the real science behind the health benefits of tree canopies.

Sent from my iPhone at mobile.

Begin forwarded message:

From: Daniel Shane
Date: January 1, 2022 at 11:45:31 PM PST
To: Dan Shane
Subject: Scientific Research on the Health Benefits of Urban Forests and Tree Canopies



GREEN HEART PLANTING Workers dig holes for installation of large trees along a Louisville highway. The trees will form a wall to reduce air pollution before it enters the community. © Mike Wilkinson

Trees remove the kind of air pollution that is most dangerous to our lungs: particulate matter. This pollution arises from the burning of fossil fuels, and can reach dangerous concentrations in the [largest cities as well as in neighborhoods near highways and factories](#). Making matters worse, cities tend to have higher rates of air pollution, especially fine particulate matter (PM) resulting from the combustion of fossil fuels and biomass, which contributes to up to three million deaths every year. For many city residents, the greatest health and safety threat is the air around them. Already, the World Health Organization [estimates](#) that 92% of the world's population is exposed to dangerous air pollution. Given rapid urbanization—up to 70% of all people will live in cities by 2050—the rate of exposure to higher levels of pollution is rising rapidly. But urbanization doesn't have to create a health crisis. In fact, there is a beautifully simple action that municipal leaders can take to reduce both extreme heat

and air pollution: plant more trees. Trees and other vegetation naturally cool the air around them by shading surfaces and releasing water vapor. Moreover, their leaves act as filters, reducing PM levels in the surrounding 30 meters (nearly 100 feet) by as much as one-quarter. It is a one-two punch of environmental action. It is known that targeted tree planting or preservation of existing tree stands can benefit countless neighborhoods. Trees can be used as a natural screen against pollution from highways and industrial areas.

Trees also offer a host of other benefits for cities. They provide habitat for wildlife, reduce storm-water runoff, and sequester carbon from the atmosphere, which helps to mitigate climate change. There is also a growing body of [research](#) showing that exposure to trees and other vegetation has a positive effect on mental health, especially for children. All of these co-benefits speak to the wisdom of greater investment in trees and urban green infrastructure such as parks and rain gardens. The City of Mountain View has Sustainable Development Goals, which include a dedicated goal for the preservation and improvement of tree canopies.

Scientific research has shown that natural environments can enhance health and have a significant therapeutic effect on human populations in urban settings. The research suggests that people who live in neighborhoods with a higher density of trees on their streets report significantly higher health perception and significantly less cardio-metabolic conditions (controlling for socio-economic and demographic factors). The research also found that having 10 more trees in a city block, on average, improves health perception in many ways.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Diane Gazzano**
Date: Wed, Jan 5, 2022 at 8:47 AM
Subject: 555 Middlefield Agenda Item
To: William Cranston <wcranstonmv@gmail.com>

Mr. William Cranston:

The City of Mountain View needs to develop housing which **protects the environment along with the safety and health of its residents**. The Avalon proposed project is woefully lacking on these priorities.

The EIR states that the building of 111 condominium units at the corner of Cypress Point Drive and Moffett Blvd and no building on Block C is the most viable environmental alternative for the 555 Middlefield project. This is the alternative that the **EPC should recommend- build Block A, no Block C**. There are better alternatives for additional housing in the Mountain View Willowgate community than Block C.

If the threats of global warming are not seriously heeded by City Government, the whole North Bay Shore area is in danger of being underwater and there will be no need for additional housing in the City. The 14.5 acres under consideration could be designed to enhance the environment and protect the safety and health of Mountain View residents. The City of Mountain View should strive to achieve the highest standards and maintain the livability of Mountain View.

Environment – Health & Safety of Residents

Block C of the Avalon project is located next to the intersection of Highway 85 and Middlefield. This is one of the noisiest and most polluting areas in the City of Mountain View. As you drive along Middlefield, in this area, you see the beautiful tall redwoods in this urban forest alongside the road. If you walk to the end of the very long dead-end canyon like street, Cypress Point Drive, you hear the roar coming from Highway 85 traffic. Avalon is proposing to clear cut this urban forest. The Sierra Club and Audubon Society, along with other community groups, have sent letters to the City outlining the benefits of these heritage trees to the community and strongly urges the City to preserve them. **These heritage trees protect the residents of Mountain View from air pollution, brake and tire dust from the roadways, and act as a shield from the roaring traffic noise. These trees also protect the biodiversity which moves through the band of trees from the Foothills all the way to the Bay.** (This can easily be seen on Goggle Maps.) It has been scientifically proven that the life expectancy of those that are exposed to this pollution will be shorten.

Recently the City has adopted an ordinance that bans smoking in homes anywhere along Cypress Point Drive and on the 555 Middlefield property in order to protect the residents' health. The City has just welcomed the establishment of a biodiversity habitat in the North Bayshore area to increase biodiversity in Mountain View. The City has set sustainability goals. It is well established fact that the **96 heritage trees Avalon is going to destroy (57) or move (39 with slim chance of survival,)** cannot be replaced by the planting of 15-gallon trees. (Google is growing trees on its properties so that it can plant mature trees on its new developments.) Many of the heritage trees are being replaced by ornamental trees and scrubs. It would be ironic if Block C which endangers the environment, biodiversity, and the health and safety of the residents is approved, as it contradicts the stated goals of the City. Apartment dwellers who will be living within 40' of the freeway, on Avalon's property, and surrounding residents will be seriously affected. Mountain View can build better.

Traffic

Avalon's plan calls for the building of 323 additional apartments on Cypress Point Drive. According to the statistics used in the EIR this will mean the addition of 780 new residents residing on one very long narrow street which dead ends into Highway 85. There are currently 402 apartments bordering Middlefield and Cypress Point Drive, with two large condominium complexes across the street on Cypress Point Drive. There is only one way to exit this canyon like road, and that is onto busy Moffett Blvd. There are no side streets.. Before the pandemic, during rush hour, there was a **bottleneck at the corner of Cypress Point Drive and Moffett Blvd**. This was caused by the exiting of cars from the Adult School parking lot at the corner into two-way traffic, and cars backed up on Moffett Blvd due to the frequency of trains during rush hour. Adding 780 more residents, whether they are driving, bicycling, or walking will create an even more hazardous situation.

The traffic consultant, Avalon has hired, states there will be no adverse traffic problems with the addition of 780 new residents on Cypress Point Drive as there will be only 19 more cars in the a.m. and 25 more cars in the p.m. during peak hours trying to turn onto Moffett Blvd! Before the City accepts this amazing statement, they need to conduct a thorough analysis of the traffic flow along the Moffett/Middlefield/Whisman corridor. The City needs to factor in that there are 3 huge high-density projects being developed close-by on Middlefield, that 1,900+ new units are being proposed for the East Whisman area, 2 strip malls on Moffett Blvd. have recently been sold and will probably be coming up for redevelopment.. (These 2 properties can be developed as multi-use properties and provide housing that would not cause the environmental, health, and safety degradation that will be caused by Avalon's Block C.) The potential new high school at the corner of Moffett and Middlefield should also be factored into the data. Data on multiple trips of Uber transportation modes during peak hours also need to be analyzed. The City and the public need an opportunity to review the data used by the consultant and the analysis of the flow of traffic in the Moffett/Middlefield corridor to ensure decisions are being made with actual facts and not alternative facts.

City Park/Bicycling

The proposed Avalon Park **will not serve the public**. With only 1.3 parking spaces per unit to accommodate residents, guest, electric charging stations, car rental spaces, delivery/vendor parking, there will be no parking spaces on Cypress Point Drive for the public. There are 2 public parks within 2 blocks of this property which are underutilized. The other properties on Cypress Point Drive maintain their own green and recreational areas.

Not only does Avalon want the City to build and maintain a park on their property Avalon is suggesting, in their written material that, the City build a path from their property to the entrance of the Stevens Creek trail on Middlefield Road. They are also suggesting that the City reconfigure the Middlefield Road as it crosses over Highway 85 so that it will be safe for pedestrians and bicyclist. This is a strong argument for not building Block C.. By not approving Block C the City could use this money to build a regional park, like Mitchell Park, which is badly needed in the Moffett/Whisman area, or use the money to build low-cost housing, or extend the living wage program recently enacted by the City. If the City deems it must build a park on the Avalon property, then the City should develop the park at the end of the block along Highway 85 and Middlefield Road so that this precious urban forest can be protected and enhanced. This will be much more beneficial to the residents of Mountain View and to the City's sustainability goals.

Avalon proposes to build a bike path through their property and have storage for 517 bicycles. Unfortunately, there are no bike paths on Cypress Point Drive or Moffett Blvd and these streets are just as dangerous for bikes as the Middlefield Road along Highway 85. Moffett Blvd is a major thoroughfare with virtually no bike lanes and it is used by the Mobile Home residents for parking because of limited parking on their property. Many people living there have service jobs and are not picked up by a company bus nor can they take public transportation to their jobs. Cypress Point Drive is a narrow street and cannot accommodate both parking and bike lanes. The MV Adult School, a very positive community benefit for the City, needs to use street parking on Cypress Point Drive when their parking lot is full. There is also a fear that the tenants of Avalon will use the school's parking lot for their parking needs as well as the parking lot of Cypress Point Lakes. None of these safety issues are discussed in Avalon's TDM plan. For the protection of Mountain View residents, they must be mapped out before any approval is giving for the development of 555 Middlefield.

7-Year Construction Period

At community meetings, current residents of Avalon have stated that they will be forced to move during the construction phase due to the health and noise pollution during this period. Their windows are old, and they will not be protected from the pollutants. With the current work at home environment, residents will often be in their apartments during the 7:00 [a.m.to](#) 6:00 p.m. construction period. The Avalon residents should be given the same consideration that any resident of Mountain View who is forced to move because of demolition of their resident.

Recently we have seen an example of construction disruption on Villa Street. The street was blocked to 2- way traffic, there were constant delays, traffic at time was diverted around the block, and construction crews took up all the parking on Villa. The EIR states that Avalon has the right to block one side of the street during construction. For 7 years this would be an intolerable situation and will greatly interfere with classes at the Adult School. There are no side streets on Cypress Point Drive. All cars must go up and down the long narrow street (the equivalent of 3 city blocks) to exit or enter Moffett Blvd. Normally the construction of 323 units takes about 2.3 years. No Block C would greatly shorten the construction perio [remainder of message body omitted; too large]

From: Hala Alshahwany
Sent: Sunday, January 2, 2022 8:59 PM
To: epc@mountainview.gov
Subject: Input for 555 Middlefield Project

Hello Chair/Members of the Environmental Planning Commission,

Thank you for the opportunity to give input on 555 Middlefield Rd project.

Under agenda item 5.2 for the coming EPC Jan 5th meeting regarding the mentioned development, two major environmental impact points were grossly inadequately addressed in the attached staff report.

The first is the short term impact of health hazards exposure to neighboring residents during construction period of 5+ years.

The report clearly states (p. 17) that “the Project will result in a project-level air quality impact and contribute to a cumulative impact on air quality that cannot be fully mitigated... Project construction emissions without mitigation would result in a significant increase in cancer risk and annual PM2.5 concentrations at all six receptors that would receive the highest concentrations of construction- related particulate matter and PM2.5. Even with application of mitigation measures identified in the Draft EIR, the PM2.5 concentrations would remain above the Bay Area Air Quality Management District’s concentration significance thresholds. Therefore, the project impact would be significant and unavoidable.”

This exposure is a great and unreasonable burden to inflict on the surrounding community. And unless the developer presents an alternative plans that would eliminate this risk with proper mitigations, the proposal should not be accepted. The report attempted to justify this potential harm by pointing to housing benefits near transportation, but I don’t see how we can justify serving some community members’ needs at the expense of existing community health.

The second environmental impact, a long term one, is the loss of tree canopy buffer between project site and HWY85. Again the staff report fails to explain how the removal of nearly 70 trees, 57 of which are heritage and mature, forming natural buffer from air toxins of auto exhaust and tire dust, can be justified for the next 20-30 years. The claim that this removal can be mitigated by planting new tree saplings is environmentally inequitable. Both the Sierra Club and Audubon Society testimonies (which were not included in the staff report or in the attachments) urged for the retention of this natural tree buffer. Why should residents on the project site and their neighbors bear the unhealthy exposure of toxins, noise and light pollution for many many years while waiting for the new canopy to provide what the existing one currently does? At the last developer/community meeting (Dec. 2021) I raised this question to Avalon Bay representative and his answer was that the community should be happy with the proposed 4 story dwellings facing HWY85 because it will block the pollution and noise for existing residents. Where is the environmental justice for the future residents of these dwellings?

This project has great potential in serving the community much needed housing, but the developer chose the wrong spot to build two thirds of the proposed units. Developing residential housing adjacent to HWY 85 and eliminating natural protective buffer in the process is not sustainable for our Cypress Point Drive community.

Thank you for your consideration and support on these critical concerns.

Hala Alshahwany
ESTF-2 Member and MV Resident

From: Kristine Keller
Sent: Wednesday, January 5, 2022 3:13 PM
To: Feisthamel, Matthew; Planning Division
Cc: Diane Gazzano ; Leona Chu; Hala Alshahwany
Subject: Re: 555 W Middlefield

Hello Matthew & Planning Department,

Thank you. I left a voicemail for that Planning Dept. as you advised, and look forward to a call and email back as soon as possible.

Planning Department, please see emails below for additional context and other notes of concern from other residents/neighbors.

Please let us know all the information you can share about why these heritage trees have been tagged for removal, what the timeline is, and how we can get a our concerns voiced prior to any action /removal takes place, including opportunity for petition to include the many concerned residents and neighbors?

The 555 W Middlefield Rd development project/heritage tree removals have not been approved by the city as far as I have been informed. Please provide us with any information or updates you can.

Also, as residents at this address we have not been notified by Eaves/Avalon of these removals and they would normally let us know of any big project /landscaping projects happening on site that could affect our safety/well being/noise issues etc.

Please be sure nothing moves forward at this time until us as residents are informed and have an opportunity to be heard in our concerns and hope that these important redwoods remain standing tall and beautiful for all of our safety and well being. These trees provide countless environment and community benefits so it is very important we have the chance to highlight those to all involved parties.

We have also reached out to Eaves to voice our concerns and ask for information on what is being planned at this time.

Thank you,
Kristine Keller & Elsa Lau

On Jan 5, 2022, at 2:36 PM, Feisthamel, Matthew wrote:

Hello Kristine Keller,

Thank you for your concerns regarding the redwood trees associated with the proposed project at 555 W Middlefield Road.

The review and approval of the redwoods are administered through the Planning Department. Please reach out to the Planning Division for an update on the project.

- **Planning Division:** (650) 903-6306 or planning.division@mountainview.gov

Thank you,

[Matthew Feisthamel](#)

Hi Hala and all,

Thank you for reaching out and asking for this information and how we can petition against removal of these 10 trees.

My partner and I live at and are very much against these being removed as they are the reason we live there, especially the huge oldest tree pictured here.

Please keep us posted.

Thank you so much,

Kristine Keller

> On Jan 4, 2022, at 10:00 PM, Leona Chu wrote:

>

> Hala: thank you for stepping forward to

> Question these 10 heritage tree removals and how we petition them to stop removals.

>

> Let us know the next steps,

>

> Leona

>

> Sent from my iPhone

>

>> On Jan 4, 2022, at 8:49 PM, Hala Alshahwany wrote:

>>

>>

>> Hello Parks-Forestry Staff,

>>

>> I (a property owner) and other residents on were informed that multiple (up to 10?) heritage redwood trees are tagged for removal inside 555 Middlefield Rd property (Eaves Apartments) which also extend to Moffett Blvd and Cypress Point Drive.

>>

>> Can you please explain why these trees (see attached photos) are tagged to be removed and is there a date set to petition against this removal?

>>

>> Thank you.

>> Hala Alshahwany

From: Lenny's Sonic
Sent: Monday, January 3, 2022 2:34 PM
To: epc@mountainview.gov
Subject: 555 W. Middlefield

TO: Mountain View Environmental Planning Commission
FROM: Lenny Siegel
SUBJECT: 555 W. Middlefield Residential Development (Item 5.2 on January 5, 2022 agenda)
DATE: January 3, 2022

I am writing to urge you to support the staff recommendations for the 555 W. Middlefield Residential Development Project. It is long past time for this well conceived project to move forward.

This project embodies three key concepts that are important, not just for Mountain View, but for our neighboring communities.

First, because our enormous jobs-housing imbalance, it is essential to add to our housing stock near our center of employment. This property is near our two largest employment centers: East Whisman and North Bayshore. While the precise plans for both those areas envision substantial housing growth, in the long run they are likely only to balance new employment with new housing. They do not address the existing housing deficit. Therefore, we need to add housing near, but outside those areas.

Second, in a “landlocked” city such as Mountain View, with little undeveloped real estate, large-scale surface parking should be replaced, where feasible, with underground parking. Land is too valuable to be devoted to parked cars.

Third, this project will not demolish any existing rental units. The existing apartments are naturally affordable, compared to new construction, and subject to rent stabilization. The down side of this approach is that neighbors, particularly apartment residents, will be likely be subject to noise, traffic disruptions, dust, and other construction impacts. As a resident of a single-family home, I have been subject to the same impacts as neighbors remodeled and new construction took place nearby. It is important to mitigate these impacts, but this is a price we pay for living in a vibrant, growing community.

Lenny

—

Lenny Siegel

From: Pablo Hernandez
Sent: Wednesday, January 5, 2022 9:24 AM
To: epc@mountainview.gov
Subject: Support for 555 W. Middlefield Project

Hi,

I just wanted to share my support for moving forward with the development of 555 W. Middlefield.

We are in desperate need of housing.

The environment can no longer support building farther away from the bay and having people commute for 3 hours in their cars.

The best way to incentivize people to live near their jobs, is to offer housing options right here in Mountain View. This is a particularly good project since it causes no displacement and is located near shops and public transit.

Thank you for your support.

Best

Pablo Hernandez

Mountain View Resident.

From: Peter Katz

Sent: Monday, January 3, 2022 10:02 PM

To: epc@mountainview.gov

Subject: Item 5.2 - Chamber support for EPC Hearing on AvalonBay's 555 W. Middlefield Road project - January 5, 2022

Dear esteemed members of the Environmental Planning Commission

On behalf of the 750 members of the Mountain View Chamber of Commerce, we wish to support the recommendations made by City staff regarding Item 5.2 on EPC's 1/5/22 public hearing: AvalonBay's 555 West Middlefield Road Project. The Chamber has publicly voiced its support previously, as the developers have been sensitive and responsive to the needs of our city, and because the project will promote economic growth and vitality. We are even more aligned now that the developer has made the changes requested by City Council several months ago.

In particular, this project adds more housing within walking distance (0.5 miles) of downtown Mountain View shops and restaurants, which directly helps our local small businesses that are still struggling to survive. It also provides Mountain View with new market-rate and affordable apartment units, without displacing any residents, that is desperately needed for people to live in close proximity of job centers in North Bayshore and East Whisman. The proposal also provides community amenities to the city, including open space and public parks, which are vital to the environmental health of our region, as well as making the area more attractive to those who live, work and play here. In short, it is a responsible plan for intelligent growth that is desperately needed for Mountain View's prosperity.

Thank you for your consideration.

Peter Katz
President & CEO
Mountain View Chamber of Commerce

--

Shop Safe, Support Local at *the MV Marketplace!*

Peter Katz • President & CEO
Mountain View Chamber of Commerce & Foundation



From: Raiza Singh

Sent: Monday, January 3, 2022 6:11 PM

To: epc@mountainview.gov; Allie Schmiesing; Margaret Capriles; William Cranston; Preeti Hehmeyer; Kammy Lo; Joyce Yin; Hank Dempsey

Cc: City Council; Chen, Wayne; , City Manager; City Clerk; MV YIMBY; South Bay YIMBY

Subject: EPC Public Hearing, Jan. 5th, Agenda Item 5.2 – 555 W. Middlefield Rd

To the Environmental Planning Commission:

Mountain View YIMBY, a local volunteer advocacy group, expresses enthusiastic support for the proposed project at 555 West Middlefield. We like this project because:

- It is a no-displacement project that adds 323 new homes in place of surface parking!
- It includes 15% on-site below market rate homes!
- Walking distance to downtown, Caltrain, a grocery store, and Stevens Creek trail. This site provides a great location to lead a car-free lifestyle to the residents.
- New pedestrian and bike path connection from Cypress Point Drive to W Middlefield makes Stevens Creek trail more easily accessible to the neighbors living south of Cypress Point Drive. Further bike and pedestrian improvements along Moffett Boulevard to the north and west of this project would be most welcome!
- The 1.34 acres of land dedicated for a new park will be a welcome addition to the neighborhood, creating a space for socializing.
- The developer has listened to community feedback and made an effort to line up the residential frontage facing Cypress Point Drive with existing trees or parking lots to the south of Cypress Point Drive in order to minimize the impact to privacy of neighbors to the south of that street.
- The developer has made an effort to preserve as many heritage trees as possible, transplanting many and planting additional trees to make up for the ones they are requesting to remove.

We hope that you recommend a speedy approval of this project to the council!

Thank you for considering our input.

Best regards,

Raiza Singh

On behalf of the members of MV YIMBY

From: Serge Bonte
Sent: Sunday, January 2, 2022 2:31 PM
To: epc@mountainview.gov
Cc: City Council <City.Council@mountainview.gov>
Subject: re: 1/5/22 EPC Meeting - Agenda Item 5.2 555 West MiddleField Road

Dear Environmental Planning Commissioners and Mountain View City Council:

Since the public hearings will come before you in short succession, I'm sending my comments to both government bodies.

I am writing in full support for this project. It is a refreshing change to see a project that will preserve all existing (naturally affordable and under the CSFRA) housing while adding a significant amount of new housing units in Mountain View (10% of them affordable via deed restrictions) and also while providing with the dedication of a 1.34-acre public park (to be delivered far ahead of project completion). Even better, the project will be phased over many years to minimize relocation and disturbance for current residents.

The developer should also be commended for listening to the community by:

- provide important community benefits. I am very pleased to see a study for a pedestrian path/sidewalk across 85 (to hopefully plug a glaring hole in the pedestrian network and greatly improve access to the Stevens Creek Trail for the neighborhood).
- preserve a good amount of healthy heritage trees and provide a good replacement ratio for heritage trees that could not be preserved (noting that some were unhealthy and non-native - Olive trees-).

Looking forward to your approval of this great project for Mountain View.

Sincerely,

Serge Bonte

From: Salim Damerджи
Sent: Monday, January 3, 2022 12:59 PM
To: epc@mountainview.gov
Subject: Agenda item 5.2 - 555 W Middlefield

Hi EPC Members,

I strongly support this project. We need more urban infill in Mountain View; academic research from Berkeley shows new housing projects reduce a neighbor's rent by 2% and their risk of displacement by 17%.

Less concerned about the displacement of people, some rich homeowners nearby are pretending to be upset about the displacement of trees, but 1) all of us likely live in a home that required trees to be replanted or removed; and 2) the applicant has already gone *above and beyond* what's required by law to mitigate the impact to tree canopy.

Please focus on what matters most: people having a home to live in. This is an exceptional project and it would be a shame if bad faith NIMBYism dressed up as environmentalism led to delays.

Thanks,
Salim

From: "Cox, Robert"

Date: January 3, 2022 at 8:00:26 AM PST

To: William Cranston

Subject: **Livable Mountain View comment on item 5.2 "Residential Development Project at 555 West Middlefield Road"**

Chair Cranston and Members of the EPC,

Livable Mountain View appreciates the opportunity to comment on item 5.2 "[Residential Development project at 555 West Middlefield Road](#)".

We would like to begin by acknowledging positive aspects of this project proposal: 111 new ownership units (condos) and 34 new 3-bedroom apartments which will help address the shortage of such housing as noted by the EPC and Council many times over the last decade.

Livable Mountain View's concerns are about the proposed *dismantling of the tree canopy* on the east of the project site and the *stated cancer risk from construction*.

Reducing tree canopy with the removal of 57 heritage trees would be a deplorable loss to the Mountain View community and to our local environment. The existing landscape provides a barrier to freeway noise and helps trap airborne toxins, such as a particulates from auto exhaust and tire dust and brake lining dust from Highway 85. It also provides a habitat for many local species of birds and land animals.

While we acknowledge the point of view in the staff report of the city's paid consultant H.T. Harvey and Associates, we ask the EPC also to seriously consider alternate testimony from well-respected volunteer staffed organizations like the Loma Prieta Chapter of the Sierra Club when evaluating the merits of doing more to preserve this natural habit. We would like the EPC to seek alternatives on the east side of the project site which could allow housing while also protecting our environment and the health of those living nearby.

The health of Mountain View residents was cited in the **staff report and the Draft EIR which states the "significant increase in cancer risk" to the surrounding residents posed during the project's proposed four-stage seven-year time frame.** (See page ES-3 of the Draft EIR and pages 17-18 of the staff report.)

We at Livable Mountain View consider the health of our city's residents to be of utmost importance. It is not clear whether this project represents a greater risk to the neighboring residents than other construction projects in Mountain View. Nor does any report state exactly what kind of cancer the residents are at risk for. Instead, the reports seem to dismiss the issue rather than advising the EPC and Council what could and should be done to lessen this risk.

Rather than simply accepting this cancer risk as "significant and unavoidable" we encourage the EPC to question staff and their consultants to obtain a transparent and understandable explanation of where, when and how this cancer risk will occur and to seek experts who can advise on all reasonable means to mitigate this risk before voting to approve this project.

We believe the resident community and the EPC should be fully informed on this critical issue so that a fully informed decision can be made.

Thank you for considering our point-of-view.

Leona Chu, Robert Cox, Louise Katz, Hala Alshahwany, Diane Gazzano, Nazanin Dashtara, Toni Rath, Mary Hodder, and Jerry Steach

For the Steering Committee of Livable Mountain View