

September 21, 2020

Ron Grove
Canyon Vista Partners LLC
206 Sequoia Avenue
Redwood City, CA 94061

Dear Mr. Grove:

SUBJECT: Summary of County Comments and Comments/Questions Received at a Major Development Pre-Application Public Workshop on August 17, 2020
County File Number: PRE 2020-00006

Thank you for your participation in the virtual public workshop held on August 17, 2020 via Zoom, regarding the General Plan Amendment and Zoning Amendment of one parcel (APNs 069-341-050) located at 206 Sequoia Avenue in the unincorporated Sequoia Tract of San Mateo County. The subject parcel, currently zoned R-1/S-74 (One-Family Residential; S-74 Combining District), is proposed to be re-zoned to R-3/S-3 (Multiple-Family Residential; 5,000 square foot minimum parcel size) to allow for higher density housing. The General Plan Land Use Designation would change from Medium Density Residential to High Density Residential. Such a proposal could yield approximately 15 units with at least 3 affordable dwelling units.

The information and comments exchanged are invaluable in fostering an understanding of the surrounding community's concerns and comments about the project. The purpose of this letter is to summarize the comments received at the workshop and include comments from the County Planning, other reviewing departments and additional comments from interested parties.

Besides the applicant, there were about 20 members of the public in attendance at the meeting. Prior to the meeting, staff received 12 emails from interested neighbors expressing concern about the project, particularly about noticing requirements, impacts of upzoning, and effects on neighborhood character.

SUMMARY OF PUBLIC CONCERNS REGARDING THE PROJECT

Generally, interested members of the public in attendance at the meeting expressed concerns regarding the proposed re-zoning. There was a strong sentiment that the project



would negatively impact the community and neighborhood as supported by the comments listed below:

1. **Noticing:** General concern was noted both via email and at the workshop that not all residents living within 300 feet of the subject parcel were notified of the workshop.

Staff Input: As required by Section 6415.4 of the County Zoning Regulations, notice was provided for “all property owners within five hundred (500) feet of the project site boundary.” If the property owner does not reside at the residence, for instance the home is a rental property, the non-owner resident would not have received the workshop notice. Future correspondence regarding this project will be forwarded to those interested members of the public who have provided County staff with their contact information.

2. **Single-Family Homes and Duplexes:** A member of the public suggested that the property owner of the subject parcel should purchase the adjacent flag lot at 214 Sequoia Avenue to create a development of single-family homes and duplexes through a re-zone to a PUD (Planned Unit Development). They believed this type of development would achieve a better transition from Woodside Road to the predominantly single-family residential community. Another member of the public commented that large lots in Sequoia Tract have been subdivided into separate lots to be individually developed with single family homes.

Staff Input: To create a development of single-family homes and duplexes on both the subject property and the adjacent property at 214 Sequoia Avenue, the applicant would likely need to apply for a re-zoning to a PUD from the County. This would be necessary to create lots which are less than 5,000 sq. ft. in size as required by the existing zoning. Regarding the subdivision of the lot to create single-family homes, each lot in the R-1/S-74 Zoning District must be a minimum of 5,000 sq. ft. and have a minimum width of 50 feet. The subject parcel could likely be subdivided into three lots with a design exception for lot depth. This would yield a maximum of six (6) dwelling units, three (3) single-family residences and three (3) accessory dwelling units (ADU). The ADUs could not be sold separately.

3. **Zoning and Property Rights:** Comments were raised that the proposed rezoning is not in compliance with the intent of the S-74 Zoning Regulations which were specifically passed to reduce the size and bulk of the structures in Sequoia Tract. It was suggested by a resident that the rezoning to R-1/S-74 constituted a promise by the County that the zoning could not be changed to allow for denser development. In that vein, many comments were also received regarding concerns of spot zoning and how far multi-family zoning should extend from Woodside Road.

Staff Input: When examining the zoning in the unincorporated Sequoia Tract area, the proposed rezoning of the subject parcel would be consistent with the general multi-family zoning concentrated on and near Woodside Road. As demonstrated at the meeting, Sequoia Tract has not been subject to spot zoning within the middle of the

R-1/S-74 area. The subject parcel is adjacent to multi-family and commercial zoning districts. In addition, the subject property is within walking distance to bus stops, Woodside Plaza and various commercial establishments on Woodside Road. Proposals for denser development are preferred in proximity to such areas and services, reducing the need for vehicular trips and providing much needed housing to address the housing crisis.

While the County's General Plan (Policies 8.1, 8.3, 8.15, and 8.31) and Housing Element (Policies HE 17 and HE 44) generally encourage the exploration of opportunities for multi-family residential development in urban neighborhoods and along major corridors such as Woodside Road, rezonings are a discretionary act subject to public comment, California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review, Planning Commission recommendation, and Board of Supervisors approval.

4. **Upzoning and the Impacts of Living with Pandemics:** Comments questioned the need for higher density development considering the effects of COVID-19. A member of the public suggested that pandemic-like events should encourage less dense development. A comment was raised, claiming that, because people are moving away from the area and working remotely due to COVID-19, that more housing may no longer be needed for the state.

Staff Input: Like most counties and cities in California, San Mateo County is extremely deficient in the amounts of market rate and affordable housing available. Such development proposals with higher densities would assist in the reduction of the overall housing shortage.

5. **Parking:** Comments suggested that the proposed project would exacerbate parking problems that the neighborhood is already experiencing. Comments indicated that each housing unit may have multiple cars associated with it and would result in extra parked cars on Sequoia Avenue. A nearby resident requested a parking survey to assess issues at Sequoia Avenue and Woodside Road.

Staff Input: At the time development plans are submitted as part of a development application, the proposed on-site parking spaces must comply with the number of parking spaces required for the proposed development pursuant to Section 6119 of the County Zoning Regulations. A development application cannot be submitted until the approval of the proposed re-zoning. Additionally, as part of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review process, Planning Staff will consider traffic and parking impacts of the project and require mitigation measures for significant impacts, if any. Staff has determined that an environmental evaluation of any project here will be prepared consistent with CEQA requirements. Traffic, parking, and other potential environmental impacts will be identified, and a public review period will be provided prior to any Planning Commission public hearing.

6. **Neighborhood Character:** A member of the public suggested that a three-story complex will not fit in with the surrounding single-family detached residential

neighborhood, noting concerns about the height and shadows that the building would cast upon adjacent properties.

Staff Input: If the zoning were to be changed to R-3/S-3, the structure would be required to have 20-foot setbacks in the front and rear and 5-foot setbacks on the sides. The maximum height would be 36 feet and lot coverage would be limited to 50 percent. There are multiple R-3 zoned areas along or in proximity to Woodside Road that back up to single-family residential zoned areas, including Nimitz Avenue, Alexander Avenue, Rutherford Avenue, Santiago Avenue, and Sequoia Avenue (subject street).

7. **Traffic and Hazards:** Comments suggested that the proposed project will generate additional traffic from the occupants of the proposed multi-family structure and create new safety hazards.

Staff Input: If the rezoning is approved and an application for development is submitted, any significant environmental impacts that may be caused by this project, including potential traffic impacts, or the creation of new traffic hazards, will be included in the environmental analysis of the project. If necessary, mitigation measures will be proposed to address such issues.

WRITTEN COMMENTS

In summary, prior to and after the meeting, Planning Staff received a total of fifteen (16) written comments from the public in opposition. The comment was generally similar to those received during the meeting.

COMMENTS FROM OTHER REVIEWING AGENCIES

To date, Planning Staff has received preliminary comments from the following agencies:

County Current Planning Section

1. The proposed zoning, R-3/S-3, and General Plan Land Use designation, High Density Residential, would potentially allow for a 15-unit multi-family residential complex, notwithstanding an affordable housing density bonus.
2. Should the applicant move forward with an application for the project as proposed, the required application would include a General Plan Amendment and Zoning Amendment.
3. The future development's compliance with the Zoning Regulations will be reviewed when project plans are submitted with an application for a Major Subdivision. A Major Subdivision application can be filed if the General Plan Amendment and Zoning Amendment are approved.
4. Should the applicant move forward with an application for the project as proposed, the application and all supporting documents and materials would be subject to review and

approval by several departments, companies and agencies, including but not limited to: County Department of Public Works, California Water Service, Fair Oaks Sewer District, and Menlo Park Fire Protection District. Agencies may request additional information if needed.

5. Any multi-family development proposal with greater than 5 units must include at least 20 percent affordable units as defined and required in the County's Inclusionary Affordable Housing Ordinance, Sec. 7908 et seq.

Fair Oaks Sewer Maintenance District (Sewer District)

6. The Planning case application indicates that the property will be subdivided into fifteen (15) condominium units. The Sewer District records indicate that the property has one existing sewer connection. The Sewer District will allow the proposed additional fourteen (14) connections provided that all associated fees are paid. The Sewer District will require the applicant to purchase the additional sewer connections and obtain all appropriate permits for the installation of the connections. The fees for new sewer connections will be calculated based on the plans submitted prior to final approval of the building plans.

The subdivided parcel must connect to the Sewer District main with an individual 6-inch sewer lateral.

7. Detailed plans showing the proposed sewer connections shall be submitted to Sewer District for review prior to final approval of the building plans. The plans shall indicate the location of the existing and proposed sewer laterals.
8. A Sewer Inspection Permit must be obtained to cap the existing sewer lateral prior to demolition of the existing building. A Sewer Inspection Permit may be obtained from the Sewer District office at 555 County Center, 5th Floor, Redwood City.
9. The applicant shall pay a plan review fee in the amount of \$300. Payment shall be made to the County of San Mateo.
10. The applicant shall mitigate the additional sewage to be generated by the site's change in use with a sanitary sewer slip lining or pipe bursting project within the Sewer District to reduce the amount of inflow and infiltration (I/I) in its collection system. This type of mitigation would be considered for offsetting the project's effect on downstream Sewer District and City of Redwood City pipes by reducing or eliminating wet weather inflow and infiltration from the Sewer District that would otherwise be conveyed to the downstream agencies' sewer systems. The applicant would be responsible for the cost of designing, constructing, and managing such improvement project.

California Water Service

11. Any improvements to the water system will be at the owner(s) expense including additional services or fire protection.
12. All storm and sewer lines must have separation from water of 10-foot horizontal separation and 1-foot vertical separation below the water main or service line.
13. Service lines which go through one property to another property must have legal easements granted with documentation submitted to Cal Water before installation.

The formal application, including all plans and materials cited earlier in this letter, should consider the comments discussed above. If you have any questions regarding this summary or need assistance with application requirements, please feel free to contact me at 650/363-4582 or by email at: rpanglao@smcgov.org. If you would like to reach him during the ongoing COVID-19 outbreak, please do so via email as County staff is currently working remotely per County directive until further notice.

Sincerely,



Ruemel Panglao, Project Planner

RSP:cmc – RSPEE0368_WCN.DOCX

cc: Board of Supervisors
Planning Commission
Steve Monowitz, Community Development Director
Lisa Aozasa, Deputy Director
Joe LaClair, Planning Services Manager
Planning Director, City of Redwood City
Menlo Park Fire Protection District
California Water Service – Bear Gulch
County Department of Public Works
Property Owners within a 500-foot Radius of the Proposed Project

Interested Members of the Public

Julie Saiki

Patricia Cooley-Wetzel

Paritosh Ambekar

Merlin Larson

Harry Vold

Rebecca Smith

Carl T

Maggie Heilman

Boris Slutsky

Cynthia Gomez

Janie Mercado

Victoria Knapp

Barbara Cage

Rob Commins

Chris Kellems

Richard Elliot

Boris Grinberg