



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
of the Los Altos-Mountain View Area
97 Hillview Avenue, Los Altos, CA 94022**

September 28, 2014

Chairman Cox and Members of the Environmental Planning Commission
City of Mountain View
500 Castro Street
Mountain View 94041

Re: Environmental Planning Commission Meeting, October 1
Agenda Item 5.2 – Public Hearing re Development at 1101 El Camino Real West

Dear Chairman Cox and Members of the EPC:

The LWV would like to comment on Regis Homes' housing proposal for the Harv's Car Wash site. First, we are pleased to see a housing developer using the State Density Bonus Law, as we have seen this law used successfully in other cities, including Los Altos with the Marie Callender site, as a way to produce below-market-rate units ("BMRs") after Palmer.

Although we are always pleased to see units built that are targeted to very low-income households, as this is where the greatest need is, we have some concerns. We agree with staff that ownership units are typically priced for moderate-income households. Our concerns are exactly those expressed by staff on page 11 of the staff report, and we have heard these same concerns expressed by administrators of BMR housing in our immediate area.

It is true that Los Altos successfully marketed condos to very-low income households in 2009, but for 8 units, there were only 29 applicants. Not only was this a small number of applicants, but some didn't qualify for loans and not all had Los Altos connection. Shortly thereafter, Los Altos changed its ordinance to target ownership BMRs to moderate-income households, perhaps because of that experience and the other concerns noted by staff.

For these reasons, we urge the City to ask Regis Homes whether it is possible to rent the BMR's instead of selling them, as this would address all the staff concerns. If this is not feasible, then we hope that staff is truly confident that the process should work well.

Thank you for considering our input.

Donna Yobs
Co-Chair, Housing Committee
LWV of the Los Altos/Mountain View Area

cc. Dan Rich
Jannie Quinn
Randy Tsuda
Terry Blount
Gerry Beaudin
Lindsay Hagan
Linda Lauzze