



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

February 11, 2014

Chairperson Grossman and Members of the Environmental Planning Commission
City of Mountain View
500 Castro Street
Mountain View 94041

Re: Environmental Planning Commission Meeting, February 12th, Agenda Item 5.1 – Rezoning of
1616 El Camino Real West

Dear Chairperson Grossman and Members of the EPC:

At the risk of being repetitive, we once again want to comment on the issue of the lack of affordable housing in the development proposed by Prometheus for 1616 El Camino Real West. We note that Prometheus is offering to build the number of below-market-rate (BMR's) rentals that would be equivalent to payment of the Affordable Rental Housing Impact Fee. Of course, we are pleased to see these units built as part of the development, but the developer is receiving a concession by deferring payment of Park Land Dedication Fees as consideration for so doing.

Although we applaud the density, we have been urging the City to take a stronger stance in requesting public/community benefits when a developer is allowed higher densities by proceeding ahead of the Precise Plan and zoning changes. This savings in time is of enormous financial benefit to the developer, and Prometheus has now proceeded ahead of rezoning a number of times in Mountain View.

We have observed and pointed out to the City that other local jurisdictions have been much more successful in negotiating with developers to provide BMR units since the Palmer decision than has Mountain View. Some use the State Density Bonus law (which could have been applied here instead of allowing the developer to proceed ahead of the rezoning and Precise Plan). Other jurisdictions have negotiated much more in the way of public benefits than those being provided by Prometheus at this site. These particular public benefits will greatly enhance the project itself. More BMR units is a public benefit that some jurisdictions have often requested; these benefit the City as a whole.

We understand from the staff report that the development appears to conform to the General Plan, with the exception that Prometheus is providing no retail (and provided no retail in Phase I of this development or at its 100 Moffett Boulevard project). This is another reason the City could take a firmer stance in terms of requesting more in the way of public benefits.

The fact that the City has not required Prometheus to provide BMR's equivalent to the payment of the Affordable Rental Housing Impact Fee earlier should not set a precedent. In fact, because Prometheus has not provided the equivalent number of units in the past should be an opportunity for the City to take a stronger position and ask for more BMR's in this situation.

Thank you for considering our input.

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

cc. Dan Rich

Jannie Quinn
Randy Tsuda
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