



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

March 19, 2017

Mayor Ken Rosenberg and Members of the City Council
City of Mountain View
500 Castro Street
Mountain View 94041

Re: Council Study Session - March 21, Agenda Item 3.1 – 240-Unit Residential Development at 1696-1758 Villa Street

Dear Mayor Rosenberg and Members of the City Council:

The LWV supports actions that provide housing affordable to all Californians. We also support below-market-rate units (BMRs) as we believe that dispersal of housing affordable to those with lower incomes is healthy for the community. Therefore, we were pleased to see the Council's direction at the December 8, 2015, Gatekeeper hearing requiring this project to provide at least 10 percent affordable units.

We note that the staff report points out on page 15 that providing 10% of the units at the new development at 65% area median income (AMI), which was Council's expectation at the Gatekeeper hearing, is very different from providing 29 units at 660 Mariposa Avenue at 80% AMI levels. First, the percentage of moderate-income units should be higher than what is proposed, because if moderate-income units are substituted for lower-income units, the result should be cost-neutral. The staff report states that 36-38 BMRs at 80% AMI would need to be provided in the new complex in order to be cost-neutral.

Second, should Council consider allowing Prometheus to substitute units in a 50-year-old building instead of in the new development, the percentage of BMRs should be significantly higher. However, we don't agree with substituting these older units as these tend to be naturally more affordable already.

Finally, we do not believe that the BMR condition required at Gatekeeper approval should be converted into a dollar value for equivalence to the Rental Housing Impact Fee (RHIF). This conversion points out that the RHIF is far too low. And we believe that additional public benefits should be required beyond what is proposed by Prometheus. Prometheus is requesting a General Plan Amendment and Rezoning, a discretionary act by Council, which means Council has the opportunity to require significant public benefits. We hope that additional BMRs will be prioritized as an additional public benefit.

Thank you for considering our input.

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

cc: Terry Blount
Eric Anderson

Dan Rich
Wayne Chen

Randy Tsuda