



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

September 18, 2018

Chair Phoebe Bressack and Members of the Planning Commission
City of Los Altos
1 N.San Antonio Road
Los Altos, CA 94022

Re: Agenda Item #2, Planning Commission Meeting Sept.20th – Proposed 50-Unit Building at 4856 El Camino Real

Dear Chair Bressack and Members of the Planning Commission:

The LWV supports affordable housing, including inclusionary zoning, so we are pleased to see the 8 below-market-rate units (BMRs) being built as part of this complex. The League believes that dispersing BMRs within a larger complex has been shown to be a socioeconomic and political success in California.

We prefer the developer's second proposal, as there would be both more BMRs and more smaller units, making them slightly more affordable than the larger units of the first proposal. We believe that the total size of the project, or the Floor Area Ratio (FAR) is more significant than consideration of density.

We do have a concern with the unit mix. The City's policy, like that of most jurisdictions, has always required that the affordable units reflect the size and number of bedrooms of the market-rate units. In this case, 6 of the total 9 one-bedroom units are proposed as BMRs, with just 1 three-bedroom unit and 1 two-bedroom unit as BMRs. All the very low-income BMRs are one-bedroom units, whereas the larger units would be moderate-income BMRs. We encourage the City to require a mix of BMRs that more accurately reflects the size and number of bedrooms of the market-rate units. We believe that the developer is gaining significant density and incentives under the State Density Bonus Law and should be required to follow the City's policy regarding the unit mix of BMRs.

Sue Russell
Co-Chair, Housing Committee
LWV of the Los Altos-Mountain View Area

Cc: Chris Jordan Jon Biggs Zach Dahl