



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

March 7, 2020

Mayor Jan Pepper and Members of the City Council
City of Los Altos
One North San Antonio Road
Los Altos, CA 94022

Re: City Council Meeting March 10th, Agenda Item # 3 – 444-450 First Street Development

Dear Mayor Pepper and Members of the City Council:

The League of Women Voters of the Los Altos/Mountain View Area continues to support the development at 444-450 First Street as earlier proposed in January. We believe that the project is in keeping with the General Plan as well as the guidelines for the Downtown Vision. We are pleased to see more housing downtown as this will add to commercial vitality. We agree with the Planning Commission that the density as well as the size and unit mix are appropriate.

We commend the developer for making further design changes to address concerns expressed by the Council in January. In particular, lowering the building height by 20 inches reduces some of the bulk/mass of the building, the revised architectural style is more in keeping with the “village character” of Los Altos, and reducing the barrier between the sidewalk and First Street entries is more welcoming. Although we don’t usually comment on design features, we mention these in support of the developer’s efforts to please Councilmembers and neighbors, just as the developer, Dutchints, did in the case of 5150 El Camino Real. Both are examples of good collaborations between the City and developers.

As always, we support adding more affordable units to the housing stock of Los Altos, as well as more market-rate housing, as there is a great need for more housing overall in our region. We believe that ownership below-market-rate units (BMRs) are best targeted to moderate-income households. Thus, we are happy to see that 3 of the 4 BMRs are moderate-income units. The incentives and waivers appear to be reasonable, in accordance with local and State law. We urge approval of this new 26-unit housing development for Los Altos.

Sue Russell
Co-Chair, Housing Committee, LWV of the Los Altos-Mountain View Area
Cc: Chris Jordan Jon Biggs Steve Golden