



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

January 9, 2012

Architecture and Site Review Committee
City of Los Altos
City Hall, 1 North San Antonio Road
Los Altos, CA 94022

Dear Chairman Lorell and Members of the Architecture and Site Committee:

Re: January 11, Architecture and Site Review Meeting
Agenda Item 2 - 4750 El Camino Real Development

The LWV of the Los Altos/Mtn.View Area would like to comment on the development proposed by Lennar Homes for 4750 El Camino Real. First, we encourage higher-density development along El Camino Real. Not only will the residences here be near good bus service, but the planned development is in line with the Grand Boulevard design for El Camino. The development is also well-situated for walking to services, especially important as we are trying to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

We are particularly pleased to see the high number of rental units being proposed; such units will contribute to diversity of housing stock in Los Altos and typically rentals are more affordable than ownership housing. While the project is only at the design stage, and we typically don't comment on design issues, we want to encourage the developer and the City to consider building 10% of the affordable rental units as very-low income units (targeted to those between 30 and 50% of area median income) rather than 15% as low -income units (targeted to those with incomes up to 80% of area median income); both options are allowed by the Municipal Code. The very-low-income units serve much more of a crucial need, both for Los Altos and the region. It is possible to find some market-rate low-income rentals in the area as part of the existing older housing stock, although we realize that newer market-rate units such as these proposed for this development will likely be affordable only to those with higher incomes.

Whichever income levels are targeted, these below-market rate ("BMR") units, as well as those in the condo portion of the project, will be an important addition to the affordable housing stock in Los Altos.

Susan Russell
Co-Chair, Affordable Housing Committee
League of Women Voters of Los Altos/Mountain View Area
Cc: David Kornfield, Planning Services Manager
Doug Schmitz, City Manager
James Walgren, Asst. City Manager

