

memorandum

DATE: July 12, 2016
TO: Fred Diaz, City Manager 
FROM: Merry Monlux, Office Specialist II

SUBJECT: Item 5.B – Mission Palms Designated Neighborhood (PLN2016-00118)

Several emails from the public regarding the Mission Palms Designated Neighborhood proposal were received after the staff report had been finalized and therefore were unable to be included as an attachment to the staff report for the project. The emails, attached hereto, are hereby made an addition to the staff report, as Third Party Correspondence.

Attachment: Public Communications

Dear City Council,

Please vote to approve the Mission Palms designated neighborhood proposal. Within our neighborhood we have moderately sized single story and two story houses, with a few exceptions. The house behind my house on palm street was flipped into a giant two story house. It is too big for our neighborhood lots, and destroys the unified look of all the surrounding houses.

To make matters worse, this could happen to anyone, anytime. If a neighbor sells their home to a house flipper, they could easily make another giant two story house, ruining the neighborhood character even more, and causing loss of privacy, sunlight, views, and solar access.

Everyone, both opposition and fellow supporters have sympathized with my family and our other neighbors who are immediately affected by this new home. I don't want any of my other neighbors to have to deal with this either, and becoming a designated neighborhood will effectively help maintain the neighborhood character and allow families to expand with minimal impact on their neighbor

Sincerely,
Amy Fong

Dear Mr. Mayor and City Councilmembers,

I am a resident of Mission Ranch. We are extremely happy that Mission Ranch has development standards that encourage single story building and reduce the maximum size of homes in our neighborhood. Our neighbors, new and old, appreciate the neighborhood's character.

Today I am writing to you about history - the history of our Fremont neighborhoods and the history of another neighborhood, Mission Palms.

In 2009, the city had several very interesting historic reports written up for Mission Ranch and Glenmoor Gardens. One document, "Historic Context of Glenmoor Gardens and Mission Ranch Subdivisions and Ranch House Architecture" covers the context and development of our suburban Fremont neighborhoods: <https://fremont.gov/DocumentCenter/View/25617> Very interesting reading for those of us who love our city.

Now Mission Palms is asking to become a Designated Neighborhood. The "Historic Context" document provides a background for the Mission Palms development as well. But without a historian providing specific information about Mission Palms, some neighbors wanted more information about the Mission Palms development. What is the original name of the neighborhood? Was the neighborhood built over 20 years or 2 years? Was it built by one company or many people? Luckily there are some almost-original residents still residing in the neighborhood who have provided historical and personal

information about Mission Palms. The newspapers of the time provide a very nice timeline of events for the development of this charming ranch neighborhood.

I invite you to look at some of the information that has been gathered for the Mission Palms history: <https://sites.google.com/site/missionpalmsinfremont/history>

I've attached an example of an advertisement in the September 8, 1963 issue of the Oakland Tribune.

Please approve the Mission Palms Designated Neighborhood so they may preserve the character that neighbors have loved for so long. Please reduce the size of homes allowed in Mission Palms so these giant homes do not wreck what is special about the neighborhood.

Janet Barton
Mission Ranch



MISSION PALMS

Modern Conveniences
with
Early California
Charm

Homes of Character

Mission Palms provides not just a house but a home with built-in character.

Mission Palms is located in Mission San Jose—just 3 blocks west of the lovely old California Mission—

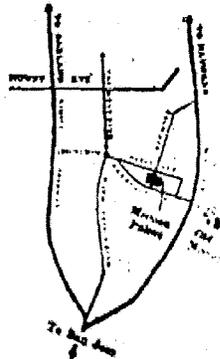
A quality residential neighborhood of custom styled homes—situated at the base of the enchanting Mission Hills—A combination of quality homes, spacious lots, breathtaking view and an ideal climate provides a perfect setting for your new home.

Each distinguished plan was designed to provide joyful and gracious living for the entire family.

6 Central Floor Plans • 1 and 2 Story
• 3-4-5 Bedrooms • Separate Dining Rooms • Min. 8000 Square Foot Lots.

Priced From **\$22,950-\$26,500**

MODELS OPEN DAILY



DIRECTIONS:

From Oakland take Nimitz Freeway to Central Fremont turnoff. Continue on Mowry Avenue to Fremont Blvd. Turn right on Fremont Blvd. to Washington Blvd. at Main intersection in Irvington—left on Washington Blvd. and continue to Models.

Phone 656-4474

To: Wayland Li, Sr. Planner, wli@fremont.gov

Re: Mission Palm Proposal, July 12th City Council Meeting

Dear Mr Li and City Council Members,

I am writing in support of the Mission Palms proposal which will come up for your consideration on July 12th.

My husband and I live just outside the boundaries of Mission Palm. The character of our neighborhood is similar. We deliberately chose a neighborhood of smaller homes with an open, inviting feel; older lots with mature trees and room for gardening; kids playing together outside in front yards; opportunities to chat between adults, as well as longer visits at our annual neighborhood potluck. It is this character of mutual respect and feeling of joint concern for all - from the youngest to the oldest members of our small community that we value and wish to preserve.

We appreciate the positive effects of living in an area with a vibrant economy and recognize that there will be changes associated with that. But, unregulated growth is a real threat to much of what attracted us, and many others, to move to Fremont. The impact on the schools is a good example. As my husband and I near retirement age and are faced with decisions about where to live during the next phase of our life, it is clear that much of what we value about our current home is threatened by these changes. Recently, a huge, over-sized home went up a few doors up the block. Without notice or warning, the older home on the lot was bulldozed down within a matter of hours. Since then, it has been replaced by a large, imposing home surrounded by a narrow strip of yard. The woman who lives next door, a widow in her late 80's who has lived in her home since it was built more than 60 years ago, seemed to have few, if any, rights. Her view of Mission Peak--something we all value-- was blocked; her home is also darker and gloomier because of a decrease in available sunlight that is now blocked by the much larger home. Prior to the tear down, she was never notified or given the opportunity to have input regarding the consequences of the plan. The developer claimed he was building it for himself and made life miserable; for her in particular, but also the rest of us on the block. One afternoon, I walked out to hear the developer yelling at her. When I said, "I don't like the way you are talking to my neighbor" he was extremely rude and somewhat threatening to me. He called the neighbor's house a dump - obviously, in his mind, her home and it's owner were not worthy of consideration. The home he built was vacant for months, but was recently sold. It seems obvious that it was never intended for personal use.

I do not want to find myself in my neighbor's situation years from now - trying to age gracefully in place, with little protection for my needs despite being a long time Fremont homeowner. I am quite attached to my home for 25 years and hope to stay as long as possible. Passing the Mission Palms

proposal would be a signal that the City of Fremont cares about its current residents as much as the theoretical potential new residents and would give me some reassurance that staying in my current home is a reasonable plan. It's likely that these issues will come up with increased frequency as Fremont continues to experience growth, along with the rest of Silicon Valley, and I hope that the City of Fremont will continue to work to balance the needs of potential residents and developers with those of current homeowners. The Mission Palms proposal would be a good step in this direction.

Thank you for your consideration of my thoughts about this issue. Yours, Debra Witter, 498 Scott St, Fremont, CA 94539

Dear City Council,

We ask for your approval for the Mission Palms Designated Neighborhood Proposal. As you review communications, both written and at the meeting on Tuesday, please keep in mind the facts about the proposal that we've attached.

Sincerely,
Larry & Lydia Fong
Lerwick St. Residents

Facts about the
Mission Palms Designated Neighborhood Proposal

Our neighborhood character will be preserved when Mission Palms becomes a Designated Neighborhood. Mission Palms has over 50 years of history. The Kroll Brothers built houses from 1962-1965, and the original tract had fewer two-stories than today, with boundaries based on the tract map. Similar tracts with spacious areas, private backyards, sunlight, views, and solar access aren't being built anymore.

The Mission Palms Designated Neighborhood Proposal:

#1: Ensures that new homes and additions maintain neighborhood character. For example, the 4,500+ SF Palm house* is out of scale with the neighborhood. This rebuilt house is more than twice the size of adjacent houses and could have built to 5,100+ SF.

#2: Allows more generous development standards than Glenmoor Gardens (two-story buildings allowed) or Mission Ranch (35% lot coverage versus 30% lot coverage).

#3: Achieves balance. Neighborhood character is preserved and expansion is permitted. For an average lot, a 3,000 SF two-story or a 3,500 SF single-story house is possible.

#4: Modeled after Mission Ranch's successful neighborhood designation. Mission Ranch's and Glenmoor's home values have stayed consistent compared to Fremont's home values, starting from their trial period as Designated Neighborhoods in 2009 until the present. The same success is expected for Mission Palms.

#5: Follows the General Plan, which specifically includes the mandate of preserving neighborhood qualities while allowing them to evolve over time, and "to maintain the scale and rhythm of established neighborhoods."

#6: Characterizes Mission Palms' neighborhood as 116 primarily moderately sized single-story single-family homes (4 of 5 houses). Original second-story homes have modestly sized second stories, with an estimated average size of 2,450 SF. This means that much larger houses "represent a clear departure from the established pattern of development" as was cited for Mission Ranch homes in a consultant's report on Design Guidelines and Standards for Alteration and Construction of Single-Family Homes in Mission Ranch.

*All house sizes include garages. Most facts are from Planning Staff reports. Other fact sources are found on our website. Please go to the website to see historical pictures and additional information regarding Mission Palms:

<https://sites.google.com/site/missionpalmsinfremont/history>