



May 11, 2023

VIA EMAIL

Planning Commission

City of Fremont

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RE: The Mission Peak Village Project at 40871 High Street (PLN2023-00134)

To the Planning Commission:

Californians for Homeownership is a 501(c)(3) organization devoted to using legal tools to address California's housing crisis. We are writing to support the City's efforts to address the housing crisis by facilitating housing development within its borders—an effort that its approval of the residential development at 40871 High Street, a 32-unit residential project, will advance. The project is exempt from CEQA, and the City is required to approve it under the Housing Accountability Act, Government Code Section 65589.5.

California has experienced a significant housing access and affordability crisis for several decades. In recent years, this crisis has reached historic proportions. As a result of the crisis, younger Californians do not have access to homeownership and housing security opportunities afforded to previous generations. Many middle- and lower-income families devote more than half of their take-home pay to rent, leaving little money to pay for transportation, food, healthcare, and other necessities. Unable to set aside money for savings, these families are denied the opportunity to become homeowners and are at grave risk of losing their housing in case of a medical issue, car trouble, or other personal emergencies. Indeed, housing insecurity in California has led to a mounting homelessness crisis. Furthermore, the crisis has disproportionately affected historically disadvantaged communities, including individuals with physical and developmental disabilities and communities of color. The COVID-19 crisis has only reinforced the need for high-quality, stable housing available to California families at all income levels.

At the core of California's housing crisis is its failure to build enough new housing to meet the needs of its growing population. The Legislative Analyst's Office estimates that from 1980 to 2010, the state should have been building approximately 210,000 units yearly in major metropolitan areas to meet housing demand. Instead, it built approximately 120,000 units per year. Today, California ranks 49th out of the 50 states in existing housing units per capita. The legislature has recognized that the housing crisis is an emergency that requires proactive solutions: "The consequences of failing to effectively and aggressively confront this crisis are hurting



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millions of Californians, robbing future generations of the chance to call California home, stifling economic opportunities for workers and businesses, worsening poverty and homelessness, and undermining the state's environmental and climate objectives." Gov. Code § 65589.5(a)(2)(A).

Our organization's sole purpose is to participate in litigation to support the critical public interest in developing new housing. The Mission Peak Village Development would provide 32 vitally needed housing units in the City, including three units for very low-income households. Further, the Project would minimize the impact on the environment through the redevelopment of an already-developed parcel. Approval of the project is well-supported by the record, and the project is categorically exempt from environmental review, as an infill project, under CEQA. If the City faces a lawsuit challenging the project's approval, we may seek to intervene in the litigation to support the City's critical efforts to address the region's housing crisis. Further, we may seek reimbursement for our attorneys' fees from the plaintiff in such a lawsuit.

Over the last five decades, California's legislature has increasingly sought to address the reluctance of local governments to approve needed housing through the Regional Housing Needs Allocation ("RHNA") and Housing Element law. The RHNA and Housing Element laws require cities to assess and modify land use policies to ensure cities can accommodate necessary additional housing. State housing law mandates that cities plan for new residential developments to fulfill RHNA obligations. In addition, the HAA ensures that cities live up to those land use rules in the years that follow. This project is part of the City's efforts to fulfill its state housing obligations to plan and build new, needed housing. Our organization submits this letter to support that effort.

The applicant has gone above and beyond in addressing the project's consistency with the General Plan, zoning ordinances, and the project's CEQA-exempt status as infill development. Further, the proposed project will not impact habitat value for endangered, rare, or threatened species, and the project approval will not result in significant effects relating to traffic, noise, air quality, or water quality. Thus, no exceptions exist that would nullify the CEQA exemption.

The City is leading the way toward a solution to the region's housing crisis with the development of the Mission Peak Village Project. The designation of the Mission Peak Village Project as CEQA-exempt and the project's approval have our support.

Sincerely,



Matthew Gelfand



FremontForEveryone.com | FremontForEveryone@gmail.com

Honorable Fremont Planning Commissioners,

Fremont for Everyone supports the application for Mission Peak Village co-housing community in Irvington.

Fremont for Everyone advocates for inclusive, affordable housing for our residents, and ensures Fremont is welcoming of new neighbors, while remaining a wonderful community for living closer to work, raising a family, and aging in place – a home for everyone!

Mission Peak Village aligns with our mission. It's an innovative way to build denser, infill housing that's aligned with the future development that we want for our city. It would include 32 units, among them 3 affordable units. As a co-housing community, it would be the first of its kind in Fremont.

As the applicant notes, "Cohousing communities respond to the basic needs of today's households—social contact, informal child care, and economic efficiency—by combining the autonomy of private dwellings with the advantages of community living."

This community supports many of the amenities that the community would want, including bicycle parking, gardening, communal dining, laundry, kids play area, crafts workshop, and more. It's expected to reduce vehicle-miles-traveled, because people have access to each other as a community as well as easy walking access to Safeway and other amenities. This can provide a model for other higher-density projects going forward as we try to meet our RHNA obligations for new construction.

Sincerely,
Fremont for Everyone



Trish Cordova

From: Reshmi <sreshmi299@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 9, 2023 1:40 PM
To: David Wage
Cc: Jane Mueller
Subject: May 11th Planning commission agenda item 4.1 Mission Peak Village

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Dear Mr. Wage,

I am writing in support of the Mission Peak Village project, a cohousing project.

I especially support cohousing communities —and Mission Peak Village in particular— as they place a high value on sustainability. They serve as evidence that residents can live lighter on the planet without sacrificing quality of life. Mission Peak Village residents are planning their community to place less reliance on the car and greater emphasis on walking, biking, and using public transportation. Their plan provides for smaller units, shared facilities, and optimum open space.

Cohousing communities provide an additional and very important component of a happy life; they address the loneliness and isolation that people experience as we grow older and it becomes more difficult to go out into the community.

I urge the planning commission to approve this item.

Thank you,

S. Reshma Inamdar
Fremont Resident.