

Memorandum

To: San Leandro Planning Commission
From: Project Team for Aurora Cottages
13533-13547 Aurora Drive, San Leandro

Date: November 15, 2012
Re: Planning Commission Work Session of 9/20/12
Comments and responses

Thank you for the opportunity to have presented the plans for our housing project in a worksession with you on September 20th. It was an interesting meeting for our group, and your comments and ideas were most welcomed and appreciated. It was educational and informative to observe your collective knowledge and suggestions for modifications to our plans. We are pleased to provide our responses to your suggestions and recommendations.

One of the repeated requests was to remove one unit. Removing one unit from the plans as presented would present a hardship for the owner. He is making a sizable investment in the neighborhood which will take many, many years to recoup, if at all, since management and maintenance will be ongoing. These units are never envisioned as condominium conversions; therefore, this market rate housing will always remain as rental opportunities for professionals moving into San Leandro as a result of the growth in the medical industry and as a result of the new fiber loop being installed for commercial and industrial growth. In order for the project to be successful, architectural and engineering dynamics have been designed in the drawings and plans which we believe make this a viable addition to the marina neighborhood.

In reference to the comments about the bocce court, the project team has listened to your concerns and has eliminated the bocce ball in favor of retaining open green space for recreational use by the residents. This decision will be complemented by the nearby marina, the park and the par course walking areas, and the owner's contribution of park-in-lieu fees.

With reference to the garbage/recyclables/yard waste containers, the entire property will be maintained by our landscape on-site manager, so that only two carts (garbage and recyclables) will be required of each unit. Those carts will be maintained in trellised/vine covered enclosures which may be seen on the plans in front of each unit. The organic and green waste will be maintained in two or three 96-gallon carts that will be placed on the property in a central location for all resident access. The small green food waste pail provided by Alameda County Industries may then be emptied by residents weekly into these organic carts, thereby eliminating the necessity for a green cart at all units.

The Development will be landscaped with drought tolerant plant materials and water efficient drip irrigation system. Root barriers will be installed to prevent tree roots from migrating and breaking through the surface.

Additionally, with respect to drainage, the storm water drainage system is designed with bio-treatment incorporating permeable paving and landscaped areas and is engineered to remove pollutants from the runoff.

With reference to the addition of vehicles in the general area, please note that parking is provided on site for all units with the addition of guest parking provided as well. Aurora Drive is a 40 foot wide street, and allows for parking on each side, which then allows for ample passage for vehicular traffic.

In response to some of the comments regarding on-site parking and storage, the current and future tenants will be asked to acknowledge and sign leases that include rules and regulations about storage and use of the garages connected with their units. Additionally, space is being built into the plans so that more storage will be made available. The garages will have sloped roofs and overhead storage provided, as well as built-in shelving. Guest parking will also be maintained as part of the information shared with the tenants. Please see revised plans.

With regard to the comments about light in the units, the first floor living area open space will have light provided by large plate glass windows in the front, a rear glass patio door and three windows along the side. The upper floors will have bedrooms with oversized windows and solar tube skylights above the stairs and hallway. The suggestion of putting additional windows into certain building walls has been received well. The front and rear units have added windows on the upper level to provide more interest to the facades.

And finally to address the comment about good neighbor fences, we would point out that the fences surrounding the current property are pre-existing and will remain in place. In addition, the interior of the project will have 6' high fencing between the private yards of each unit.

The shared property line with the city's golf course managed by American Golf Corporation (AGC) will feature a newly designed wooden fence, after the removal of the existing wire fencing which was installed many years ago before the renovation of the entire golf course and is no longer needed.

AGC has also submitted its concerns that residents are made aware of the golf course natural habitat property, and that there will be no future improvement or maintenance beyond what currently exists. All of their concerns with regard to liability for golf balls, maintenance or repair of fencing have been noted and will be included in leases with tenants and are duly noted by the project owner.

The other remaining concern which will be included in the residential tenant leases will be the disclosure that the city maintains its golf course corporation yard nearby and that operations begin at 6 a.m. every morning for scheduled maintenance on the course.

The comment by the public regarding the project not being 350 feet deep is incorrect; in fact, the property is 350 feet deep and is sited specifically to maintain the view corridor to the golf course and the marina park area.

With regard to rental housing availability, there are many more rentals, and in fact, very large apartment complexes in other parts of the city that contain far more units than these duplexes will be in this area. This project, in fact, is most compatible with the rest of the Aurora Drive and the development will provide needed rental units. The project has a density that is consistent with existing projects as well as the planned high density development to the south at the corner of Fairway and Aurora Drive.

It is our understanding that one of the purposes for bringing a planned unit development to the Planning Commission for review is specifically to gain approval for a slightly changed focus in the R.O. District. Our purpose here is to share this exciting opportunity for this very viable project.