

Maloney, Mike

From: Maloney, Mike
Sent: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 10:25 AM
To: _PLANCOM - Planning Commission
Subject: FW: 11/30 PC Item 8.1
Attachments: Photo Sims - Emerald Isle.pdf

Information only – Please do not reply to all

Note. This information will also be posted on the legislative portal and the iPad app.

Chair Cisco and Members of the Planning Commission

Attached, please find “before and after” photo renderings for the Emerald Isle project, Item 8.1 on Thursday’s agenda.

Additionally, a member of the Commission requested further explanation of staff’s analysis of the project as it relates to separation standards for community care facilities. As discussed in the staff report, Zoning Code Section 20-42.060(C) precludes any two community care facilities from being located within 300 feet of each other. It also identifies a condition of over-concentration when two or more facilities are within 1000 feet of each other. Community care facilities are permitted in an over-concentration condition, however if the review authority determines that approval of a new facility could negatively impact the health, safety, or general welfare of the surrounding neighborhood, then the over-concentration condition can be used as grounds for denial. Community care facilities are permitted in every zoning district; staff’s interpretation of the over-concentration clause in the Zoning Code is that the intent is to protect the character of residential neighborhoods (and to a lesser degree, commercial or industrial districts) from being substantively changed by the prevalence of the community care land use. Single-family residential neighborhoods are particularly at risk, because while a community care facility is residential in nature, it also has operational characteristics such as multiple residential units, employees, and visitors, which, in an over-concentration condition, could impact the surrounding neighborhood.

In reviewing the proposed Emerald Isle facility, staff looked at the surrounding community and neighborhood. Although the proposed facility will be within 1000 feet of the existing Fountaingrove Lodge community care facility, neither parcel is within the boundaries of a well-defined neighborhood. The Fountaingrove Lodge and the proposed Emerald Isle (via Gullane Drive) are accessed off of Thomas Lake Harris Drive, a regional arterial street. The nearby residential subdivisions are clustered in nature and are all served by local streets that feed off of Thomas Lake Harris, but do not have any direct connection to the Emerald Isle or the Fountaingrove Lodge campuses. Additionally, the site of the proposed Emerald Isle Facility is completely surrounded by open space and a golf course. The Initial Study and supporting technical documents have identified that there are not likely to be traffic, noise, aesthetic, or other spillover impacts to nearby residential neighborhoods. Staff’s determination is that, while a condition of over-concentration exists by definition, there is little risk to the health, safety, or general welfare of a community or neighborhood. Therefore, staff is recommending approval of the Conditional Use Permit.

Please contact me if there are any questions.

Patrick Streeter, AICP | Senior Planner

Planning and Economic Development | 100 Santa Rosa Avenue, Room 3 | Santa Rosa, CA 95404

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Emerald Isle Photo Simulations by The Digital Realm

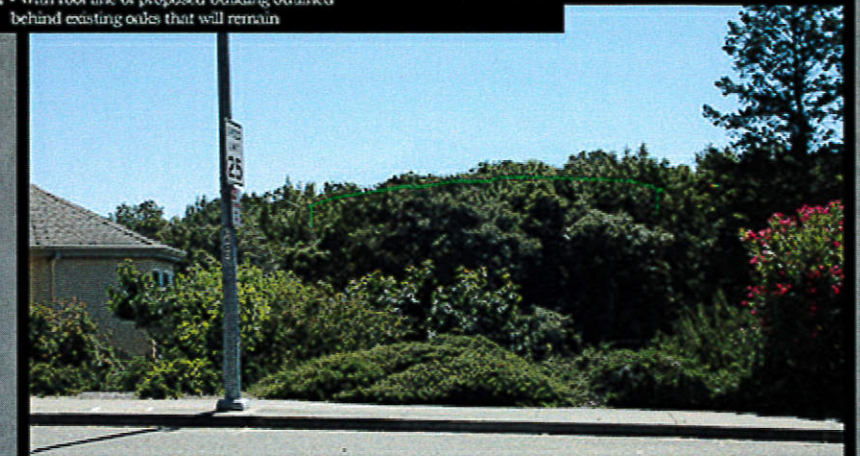


The Digital Realm
April 2017

Gullane Drive

View 1 - With roof line of proposed building outlined behind existing oaks that will remain

Emerald Isle
Santa Rosa, CA



The Digital Realm
April 2017

Thomas Lake Harris Drive

View 2 - With roof line of proposed building outlined behind existing oaks that will remain

Emerald Isle
Santa Rosa, CA



The Digital Realm
April 2017

Thomas Lake Harris Drive

View 3 - With roof line of proposed building outlined behind existing oaks that will remain

Emerald Isle
Santa Rosa, CA

City of Santa Rosa

APR 27 2017

Planning & Economic
Development Department



The Digital Realm
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Gullane Drive
View 1 - Existing

Emerald Isle
Santa Rosa, Ca.



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The Digital Realm
April 2017

Thomas Lake Harris Drive
View 3 - Existing

Emerald Isle
Santa Rosa, Ca.



The Digital Realm
April 2017

Thomas Lake Harris Drive
View 3 - With roof line of proposed building outlined
behind existing oaks that will remain

Emerald Isle
Santa Rosa, Ca.

November 29, 2017

Honorable Chair and Planning Commissioners,

I am writing to you regarding Project File Number PRJ17-031, consisting of a Conditional Use Permit and Hillside Development Permit for Oakmont of Emerald Isle (Project) at 0 Gullane Drive to be considered at the Special Planning Commission meeting on Nov. 30, 2017.

I intend to implore your greater ethos as Planning Commissioners, and ask you to deny the application before you for both ethical and legal reasons. You are faced with a task in front of you to make a decision beyond the typical development, please consider more than just the word-smith'ed Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND), and mandatory findings of both the MND and related entitlements.

At question and of greatest concern, is Oakmont Senior Living, LLC an appropriate, responsible, reliable, and trustworthy community member? I point you to a number of articles that have been published which address just that:

<http://abc7news.com/varenn-oakmont-senior-living-resident-describes-harrowing-facility-evacuation/2531031/>

<http://abc7news.com/seniors-may-have-been-left-at-burning-oakmont-living-center/2526856/>

https://www.buzzfeed.com/briannasacks/workers-say-a-california-retirement-community-left-its?utm_term=.muJv3pzNM#.usDvwmRXj

<http://abc7news.com/dozens-of-senior-citizens-may-have-been-left-by-staff-at-burning-varenn-oakmont-senior-living-community/2526856/>

<http://abc7news.com/family-employee-who-helped-evacuate-assisted-living-facility-question-if-fire-evacuation-plan-existed/2541421/>

<http://www.pressdemocrat.com/news/7531232-181/state-investigation-launched-into-fire?artslide=0>

<http://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-ln-fire-evacuation-lawsuit-20171121-story.html>

I believe that the responsiveness (or lack thereof), poor management, training, and operation of Oakmont Living, LLC. facilities speaks for how they value themselves as a community member in Santa Rosa.

We have learned with the recent fires that the concentration of residential development, let alone the facilities owned and managed by Oakmont Senior Living, LLC., within the Fountaingrove area are too over concentrated and impacted the ability to safely evacuate without potential loss of life. Access was limited due to the fires, and response time from public safety was limited given the many constraints. An additional facility as proposed puts the residents of the facility, its staff, and emergency personnel at risk of loss of life and property. The staff report makes reference to the isolation of the parcel in its justification of extra parking. Extra parking is trivial when such isolation may lead to

inaccessibility in a time of need as the Villa Capri was, which was located off a primary thoroughfare.

In addition to the above, I'd like to address the MND and mandatory findings, which I hope lend a hand in your decision to deny the application before you.

Staff Report:

The staff report identifies a number of goals/policies dedicated to the preservation of the natural habitat, open space, hillside, views, etc. – this is never before developed land, not infill development. The Project proposes replacing much needed, heavily valued open space with development, which itself detracts from the preservation of open space, including scenic characteristics, natural waterways, and hillsides. This is just another development, on another hillside, negatively impacting the character of the hillside and the natural habitat, which clearly just informed us via a natural disaster, that these types of developments do not belong here.

The staff report extenuates an over concentration of community care facilities. The Project as proposed is an over concentration of such facilities. This leads to an endangerment to many, including the residents, staff, and emergency personnel as previously stated. The mitigation measures do not, and cannot sufficiently preserve the health, safety and general welfare of the community and the neighborhood where the facility is proposed.

Staff's determination regarding the over concentration is irresponsible. The staff report asserts that due to the unique nature of the project site, being set back, surrounded by vegetated slopes, and clustered nature of surrounding residential development; however these are the exact reasons why the site/development presents dangers that are un-mitigatable. Mr. Patrick Streeter proclaims that conditions created by the over concentration are "negligible." NEGLIGIBLE – small and unimportant. Please ask yourself, these conditions are the exact reason why the Villa Capri (owned and operated by Oakmont Senior Living, LLC.) and thousands of homes were lost in the Fountaingrove area, including the tragic loss of 24 lives.

The staff report, and the MND do not adequately address or define what is "negligible," and the metrics used to make such a determination. The staff report and the MND do not defend or provide evidence of impacts that are less than significant or mitigated to a less than significant finding based upon a "negligible" impact. Please, ask one of the thousands of displaced residents of Santa Rosa if the loss of their home, property, and loved ones was negligible?

As briefly addressed in the staff report, the last community meeting was held on July 6, 2016, well attended by neighbors who raised questions about height, design, orientation of Gullane Drive, parking and the operation of the facility. Since July 6, 2016 the project design has evolved from a single story building to a two story building, twice the square footage and capacity. Not only has the scope of the project dramatically expanded, a

natural disaster has leveled the surrounding community. If a community meeting was held proposing the current project and after the October 2017 fires, might the community respond differently? The staff report inaccurately depicts community support for a project that is not in front of you today.

The Environmental Impact section of the staff report outlines a noticing period from Sept. 25 – Oct. 25. This is typically ample time for such a project, and the City staff even had the foresight to request a follow up assessment in response to the Tubbs fire. However, as indicated in the staff report, on Oct. 26th the public hearing was cancelled so that staff resources could be allocated to much needed disaster recovery. Logically, due to the needed attention to the fires, displaced residents, public resources and agencies which were focusing their efforts elsewhere, would it not make sense to extend the circulation of the MND to ensure adequate time could be spent on evaluating the MND given the public review period overlapped with the 3 weeks that Sonoma County literally shut down (public and all) to address the emergency and support those who were impacted.

Mitigated Negative Declaration:

1. a), b), c)

Potentially significant impact – The Project is located in an entirely undeveloped hillside which provides and serves as a scenic vista from the north/west. The Project will level approximately an acre and construct a two story building. This will significantly impact the views of this hillside which is primarily dense with trees and brush (outside the burned areas). This is not mitigated, addressed, or explained, how the design of the development does not detract from the existing open space in the immediate vicinity. The photo simulations are taken in April 2017, prior to the fire devastation, and not a relevant or accurate perspective or exhibit.

4. a), b), d), e), f)

Potentially significant impact – There are identified plant species that are endangered as well as animal species. The proposed mitigation measures only proposed “evaluating the feasibility of reconfiguring the Project design.” This is not a mitigation, as it does not provide a guarantee that the species will be protected because it is based on the feasibility of the redesign, which the mitigations do not indicate who has the authority to determine. The mitigation or outcome must be more definitive. If protected or endangered species are found or known, the project should be redesigned and a focused study of this impact should be evaluated and brought back before the Planning Commission for reconsideration.

5. a)

This evaluation and mitigation is not consistent with both Assembly Bill 52 and Senate Bill 18, subject to litigation, poorly recorded, and demonstrates a lack of follow through. The representatives of Lytton Rancheria of California have clearly indicated a desire to consult further with the appropriate lead agency (AKA City of

Santa Rosa). Yet, there was no follow up consultation as required, nor was there proper documentation of compliance with both Assembly Bill 52 and Senate Bill 18.

MM CUL-1

Improperly identifies the City of Healdsburg to submit documentation of discoveries during construction. This should nullify the credibility of the MND until the entire document can be rewritten and reevaluated to ensure “copy and paste” from previously published MND’s from FirstCarbon Solutions is not occurring elsewhere in the document.

6.ii) & MM GEO-1

Potentially significant impact – the Project should be in conformance with the seismic provisions of the 2016 CBC as the 2013 CBC is outdated and improperly referenced as a mitigation measure.

10.b)

Potentially significant impact – The Project is not consistent with the policies and objectives of the General Plan, municipal code, including the Zoning Ordinance. The analysis combines multiple properties that make up the 12.17 acre site, in order to justify the density at “half of what would typically be permitted.” However, the development is happening within approximately one acre within the assemblage of properties (which is not explained). Without knowing the assemblage, this puts the density of this development at nearly 49 units within an about an acre of space. This is a gross misrepresentation of the density calculation and lacks thorough explanation of the assemblage of parcels to make up the development site. 49 units within roughly 48,000 square feet is not the same as single and multi-family residential development at a density of 2.0 to 8.0 units per gross acre.

Additionally, the Project is in direct conflict with the standard of over concentration of care facilities without further explanation of how such over concentration will not be detrimental to the public health, safety and welfare. The finding does not address this inconsistency at all, or provide a metric of evaluating or determining that the over concentration would or would not impact the public health, safety, or welfare.

13.a)

Potentially significant impact – The Project proposes beds for 71 residents, and does not offer the number of jobs it will create. The finding of less than significant claims that the facility is not expected to serve substantial numbers of residents from outside the Santa Rosa area, and that staff and visitors would most likely reside in neighboring cities and communities. This is unfounded, as there are no assurances, and no methodology provided to support these claims. The senior and aging community population should be evaluated against the availability of supporting facilities to establish local demand and supply. The level of significance is based on conjecture without explanation or assurance that the facility will not induce substantial population growth in an area.

14.a) b)

Potential significant impact – Despite heroic efforts of emergency personnel in October 2017, thousands lost their homes, and their loved ones. The City's fire department is a fully staffed, and a fully capable department. However, under nature's most catastrophic events, developed hillsides, choke points in hillside roads, restricted access due to limited roadway capacity, and limited terrain in hillside areas where single points of access were blocked, the Villa Capri burned down with survivors barely escaping in time, among the many homes lost.

This is not an area meant for development at such a density with single point access in an area already limited by access. The finding adequately describes response times that are established as goals in the City's General Plan. The finding relies on these goals by stating that the Project would result in a significant environmental impact if new physically altered fire protection facilities would need to be built to maintain acceptable service levels. However, the finding does not provide any data to support if these goals are being met, the current service ratios and response times, and how the Project may or may not increase the existing service levels.

Similarly, the findings regarding police protection makes absolutely no reference to service times or ratios. And does not provide any supporting data to justify why/how the proposed use does not typically involve increased calls for service. The finding compares the calls for service to commercial retail, however as the proposed use is not the same as commercial retail, you cannot compare calls for service to such a different use. The proposed use (assisted living) results in roughly 12,000 complaints lodged with the Department of Social Services in California every year. This includes beatings, theft, financial fraud, sexual abuse, and deaths due to neglect. These calls also go to local law enforcement who require service calls and follow up. This is of course drastically different from "commercial retail" as compared to in the MND. Of course there is not an increase in service calls similar to commercial retail. There is an increase in calls as it relates to a senior assisted living facility. And a quick Google search of "Oakmont Senior Living, LLC." tells you very quickly if facilities owned and operated by this company tend to result in such circumstances – including the currently open cases within the California Department of Social Services.

Without this data, one cannot make a finding of less than significant.

Conditional Use Permit Findings:

As the Planning Commission, in addition to certifying this incomplete, inaccurate, and misleading MND, you must make nine findings to approve the Conditional Use Permit. Of which, given the information provided, the following considerations should be made as it relates to the findings:

- Finding B - The proposed Project does not meet the General Plan/Zoning Code/Policies in that there is an existing and acknowledged over concentration of

such facilities, and no supporting information on how the over concentration would not negatively impact the public health, safety, and welfare.

- Finding C - The compatibility with the Fountaingrove Ranch Planned Community District based on a desire for clustered residential development is unfounded. The proposed Project is not clustered residential development; it is a single building, two stories, in a boxed configuration which does not facilitate clustering. The proposed Project is oriented in a manner to create privacy and seclusion among a golf course which will never relate to or correspond to clustered residential development in the immediate vicinity.
- Finding D - States that the Project is located in a developed area. This is an undeveloped area. This is not infill development with services already established. This is a major intensification of vacant raw land. The location and operating characteristics of the proposed Project are not compatible with the open space nature of the surrounding area.
- Finding E – The finding cites steep slopes, and vegetation; these, among the seclusion, over concentration of like facilities, and configuration of the development facilitate conditions that have recently proven in October 2017 to be injurious and detrimental to the public interest, health, safety, and welfare, and materially injurious to persons, and property.
- Finding F – The proposed facility does not comply with all applicable requirements of Chapter 20-42.060 of the Santa Rosa Zoning Code, Community Care Facilities. This is spelled out in the staff report as it relates to over concentration, and does not provide any supporting documentation or information as to how “negligible” is measured or calculated when evaluating impacts on public health, safety, and welfare.
- Finding G – As required by the MND, the development must conform to the 2013 California Building Code. However, this has been superseded by the 2016 California Building Code. This finding falsely claims compliance with current building code.
- Finding I – For all the reasons stated about the MND, this finding cannot be made.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Deny this application, do not enable and reward such an irresponsible developer and company.

Sincerely,

Michael Allen

Streeter, Patrick

From: Michael Kaeser <captbraniff@peoplepc.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 29, 2017 2:25 PM
To: Streeter, Patrick
Subject: File PRJ17-031

Follow Up Flag: Flag for follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Dear Mr. Streeter,

Please put me on record opposed to the Oakmont Senior Living project known as Oakmond Emerald Isle, File PR17-031.

This project would be located in a fire hazard zone that was swept by the recent Tubbs Fire, which burned the Killarney Circle neighborhood immediately adjacent to Gullane Drive as well as the high-density housing area to the north of the golf course, off Thomas Lake Harris Drive. This project appears to be proposed for a forested area in the midst of the golf course through which the Tubbs Fire burned. It appears the location would have limited escape on Gullane Drive, posing a safety hazard to potential residents.

Furthermore, Oakmont Senior Living seems unfit to be approved to operate the proposed facility, based on news accounts of the actions of Oakmont Senior Living management and staff during and after the Tubbs Fire. Specifically, staff were reported to have abandoned patients at the Oakmont Varena site was destroyed by the fire and at the Fountaingrove Lodge property, adjacent to the site of this proposed project. In addition, debris removal and disposal from the Varena site was begun without proper authorization and had to be halted by law enforcement and the site placed under guard pending a search for possible human remains.

I urge the Planning Commission to reject project.

Sincerely,

Michael J. Kaeser
1988 Viewpointe Cir
Santa Rosa, CA 95403

Maloney, Mike

From: Maloney, Mike
Sent: Wednesday, November 29, 2017 9:34 PM
To: _PLANCOM - Planning Commission
Subject: 11/30 PC, Item 8.1

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Information only – Please do not reply to all

Chair Cisco and Members of the Planning Commission

Below, please find staff's response to questions brought forward by a member of the Commission related to the proposed Emerald Isle community care facility, Item 8.1 on tomorrow's agenda. Question 1 was asked by more than one Planning Commission member:

Q1: Is there actual access to this site?

Staff Response: Temporary construction fencing was installed to accommodate cleanup of the Oaks subdivision, which has connections to Gullane Drive. As of Wednesday, 11/29, Gullane Drive is again accessible. A public hearing sign was installed at the end of Gullane Drive, which would not have been approachable while the street was closed. However, in addition to onsite signage, the meeting was noticed with postings at City Hall, in the Press Democrat, mailings to property owners, and e-mail notice to interested individuals. This is the second time the item was noticed.

Q2: Who is responsible for reconfiguring the golf course in that area?

Staff Response: The project does not propose any changes to the golf course, with the exception of a golf cart crossing at the terminus of Gullane Drive. Reciprocal access easements at the location have already been recorded.

Q3: Will the developer thoroughly test condition of any burned or singed trees on the property before removal?

Staff Response: A tree inventory and protection plan will be required with Grading Permit application submittal.

Q4: Is there a scale on Percent Slope Map?

Staff Response: Attachment 3 – Percent Slope Map includes a scale, but not a legend. Areas in bright green have >10% slope; areas in red have >20% slope.

Q5: Given what we have witnessed and learned from the Tubbs Fire, will there be consideration of use and treatment of eaves and in flow/outflow venting systems?

Staff Response: Planning and Economic Development has not, at this time, adopted new building standards or design guidelines in response to the fires. The applicant may be able to speak more specifically to planned building construction. All new construction will be subject to the 2016 California Building Code and current local and state fire standards.

Q6: Assuming Council & PC & Design Review approval? What is anticipated start of construction?

Staff Response: The applicant will be advised of this question and can respond at the meeting.

Please contact me with any additional questions or requests for clarification.

Thank you,

Patrick Streeter, AICP | Senior Planner

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29 November 2017

Patti Cisco, Chair
Casey Edmondson, Vice Chair
Vicki Duggan
Curt Groninga
Julian Peterson
Peter Rumble
Karen Weeks
Santa Rosa Planning Commission

Via email

Re: Planning Commission Agenda Items 8.1 and 8.4, 11/30/17 Meeting

Dear Chair Cisco and Members of the Santa Rosa Planning Commission:

On your November 30th agenda you have two items that I find concerning.

Item 8.1 is a request by Oakmont Senior Living/OSL Santa Rosa Properties LLC requesting approval of Oakmont of Emerald Isle Assisted Living's request for a Conditional Use Permit for construction and operation of a 49-unit assisted living facility, for a Hillside Development Permit for the same project, and for adoption of a Mitigated Negative Declaration for the same project.

Item 8.4 is a request by City Ventures/Arterial Vascular Engineering, Inc. for the "Round Barn" project, requesting approval of a General Plan Amendment and Rezoning of the site, and for adoption of a Mitigated Negative Declaration for the site (ultimately to be approved by the City Council).

Both of these proposed actions are for properties in Fountaingrove. Not to overstate the obvious, but substantial portions of Fountaingrove burned during the Tubbs fire, including existing properties in the immediate vicinity of the properties on which you are requested to take actions.

APPROVALS ARE PREMATURE

Santa Rosa, as a community, has agreed that burned properties should be allowed to rebuild, and agreed to expedite that rebuilding. That discussion has taken place, and the City Council has confirmed that community decision.

These two proposals, however, are for **new** development in an area substantially burned. Neither the community, nor the City Council, has as yet had an opportunity to discuss whether and/or what we want to do about **new** development in areas such as Fountaingrove, and I believe it is necessary to have that

discussion prior to approving actual new development (the Emerald Isle proposal) or a General Plan Amendment/Rezoning that will inevitably lead to new development (the Round Barn proposal).

It is premature to consider, let alone approve, either of these projects. Not only does our community and the City Council deserve the right to have the conversation about new development in burned areas, but I strongly believe that it would be prudent to wait until Cal Fire and Santa Rosa have had the time and opportunity to fully evaluate and assess the Tubbs fire, and potentially revise maps and other building regulations, prior to taking any actions that would result in new construction on vacant lands in Fountaingrove.

I would request that you put Items 8.1 and 8.4 on hold for at least six months to allow for such community conversation and assessment of the impacts of the Tubbs fire.

THE MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATIONS ARE INACCURATE AND INADEQUATE

Both of the Mitigated Negative Declarations for 8.1 and 8.4 (coincidentally prepared by the same firm – FirstCarbon Solutions), and the November 6, 2017 Memo from FirstCarbon Solutions responding to the Tubbs fire with regard to the Emerald Isle project, state that there is **Less than a Significant Impact** for any significant risk of loss, injury or death from wildland fires for both proposals, in virtually identical language.

Because their conclusion, for both projects, is that those actions will have a Less than a Significant Impact, there are no mitigation measures proposed in the Mitigated Negative Declarations.

I do not believe that these assertions are accurate, based both on the information they provide (and don't provide), as discussed below, and based on the real life experience we have with the Tubbs fire. In fact, I believe that both of these Mitigated Negative Declarations are disingenuous, at best.

Both of the Mitigated Negative Declarations reference a variety of materials in support of their conclusions that these project sites are located in **“Non-Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone.”** Unfortunately, they neglect to reference the two documents that actually matter in this regard:

1. **City of Santa Rosa Local Hazard Mitigation Plan, dated October 2016** (they do reference an earlier version of this Plan, but fail to reference the most current version, or any pages that I believe would be useful to your decision making). This report is available at: <https://srcity.org/DocumentCenter/View/3982>

2. **City of Santa Rosa Wildland – Urban Interface Fire Area Map, dated 28 January 2009** This map is available at: <https://srcity.org/DocumentCenter/View/4775>

Fire Hazard Severity Zones/Wildland-Urban Interface Fire Areas:

Both Mitigated Negative Declarations reference the CalFire “Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones in LRA [Local Responsibility Area]” map, and use that map (along with a similar U.S. Forest Service Wildfire Hazard potential map) to support their contention that neither of the project locations is in a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone.

While I agree that those maps do support that conclusion, I do not believe that those maps are the best information that should have been used in the preparation of these Mitigated Negative Declarations, leading to what I believe are erroneous and potentially dangerous conclusions.

If you refer to the October 2016 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan, you will discover on page 59 (page 63 of the pdf document) that:

... On February 24, 2009 the Santa Rosa City Council approved an amendment to Chapter 47 Section 18-44.4702.1 of the 2007 California Fire Code (CFC) defining a Wildland Urban Interface Fire Area as follows:

"Wildland-Urban Interface Fire Area is a geographical area in the City of Santa Rosa at significant risk from wildfires as designated on the map titled Wildland-Urban Interface Fire Area, dated January 28, 2009 and retained on file in the City Geographic Information System and in the Office of the City's Fire Marshall. The Wildland-Urban Interface Fire Area shall include Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones recommended by the Director of the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection pursuant to Public Resource Code sections 4201 – 4204 and Government Code sections 51175 – 51189." (emphasis added)

If you refer to Santa Rosa's current Wildland-Urban Interface Fire Area Map, you will see that both of the potential projects you are being requested to approve are within this area of "significant risk from wildfires."

Further, at page 63 of the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (page 67 of the pdf document), the following statement is made:

Exposure to future wildfires is expected to increase. Areas in Santa Rosa with higher potential for wildfire risks include hillside residential neighborhoods in the northern and eastern areas of the City with tall grasses and chaparral, which provide fuel for wildfires. With population growth and urbanization, a larger number of people and homes may be located in areas of wildfire risk. However, the General Plan designates the density of homes in Santa Rosa's WUI as primarily low density, including Very Low Density Residential (0.2–2.0 units per acre), Land Low Density Residential (2.0-8.0 units per acre).

Both of the proposals before you would increase residential density in the current Wildland-Urban Interface Fire Area, and the Emerald Isle proposal would increase it with a population of elderly and disabled residents.

In the November 6, 2017 Memo prepared for the Emerald Isle project, to discuss the CEQA evaluation after the Tubbs fire, the following statements are made:

Implementation of the proposed Project would not substantially alter the risk of wildfire on the site, and continued implementation of existing wildfire mitigation strategies by responsible agencies in the area as well as implementation of any additional strategies to be developed and implemented in the coming months would be sufficient to ensure that the associated impacts from Project implementation remain less than significant. Therefore the analysis contained in the Draft ISMND remains valid.

While I agree that the risk of a wildfire remains substantially the same whether this project is built or not, I strongly object to the reaffirmed conclusion that this project is in a **“Non-Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone.”** In fact, since the Mitigated Negative Declaration declares this to be “Less than a Significant Impact,” no mitigation measures are proposed. Any future “additional strategies to be developed and implemented in the coming months” are in fact mitigation measures that must be included in the Mitigated Negative Declaration so that the Planning Commission can evaluate the adequacy of said possible mitigations. Of course, they can’t be included, because said mitigation measures are presently unknown.

I believe that the evidence available indicates that there may be a significant environmental impact of fire danger for both of these proposed projects. I would even go further, and state that there is no question that fire danger is unquestionably a significant environmental impact for both of these proposed projects.

Since both of the Mitigated Negative Declarations fail to properly evaluate or even acknowledge that environmental impact, they are inaccurate, inadequate, and you should reject them both.

PROJECT SPECIFIC COMMENTS

Emerald Isle Project, Item 8.1:

Beyond the fact that neither the community, nor the City Council, has had the opportunity to have the conversation about permitting new development in burned areas, I have one very specific problem with this proposal.

This project is built on a cul-de-sac. There is only one way in and one way out of the project. As we all learned through our experience with the recent fires, safe evacuation is both difficult and extremely important. To permit a project of entirely elderly and disabled residents on a cul-de-sac is a very poor idea. I am quite sensitive to this problem, since I live on a dead end street, and only have one way in and one way out of my home – this was very challenging and frightening during the fires.

I would request that you require that this project – if/when it comes back to you after the community conversation has taken place, and after the Mitigated Negative Declaration has been corrected – have two means of egress. A cul-de-sac is a terrible idea, particularly for this sensitive population of residents.

Round Barn Project, Item 8.4:

First, I generally dislike General Plan Amendments and Rezoning that come forward without an actual project that will be built.

Second, assuming the community wants to approve new development in Fountaingrove, I very much oppose the General Plan amendment to medium low density residential and rezoning of this property to R-1-6, single family residential. Although City Ventures has a plan for potential townhomes in the future, they may or may not come to fruition. This redesignation and rezoning could permit building of more single family homes at some point in the future, and because of the location, it is likely that they would in no way be affordable.

If there is agreement to permit new residential development in Fountaingrove, I believe it more appropriate that this property be redesignated and rezoned for at least medium density residential, and no project should be approved without a requirement for legally affordable housing to be built as part of the ultimate development. Although City Ventures' proposed project would be for units that would be "more affordable" by design (since they will not be single family homes), I do not believe that they have made any provision for legally affordable units.

I would request that you require that this project – if/when it comes back to you after the community conversation has taken place, and after the Mitigated Negative Declaration has been corrected – be required to be for medium density housing, and that you make clear that you want to see any development project coming back on this property with legally affordable housing as part of the proposal.

Thank you for your consideration. As always, please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Sonia E. Taylor

Cc: Mayor Chris Coursey
Vice Mayor Jack Tibbetts
Councilmember Julie Combs
Councilmember Ernesto Olivares
Councilmember Chris Rogers
Councilmember John Sawyer
Councilmember Tom Schwedhelm
David Guhin, Director of Planning and Economic Development
Clare Hartman, Deputy Director, Planning
William Rose, Supervising Planner
Aaron Hollister, Planner
Patrick Streeter, Planner
Kevin McCallum, Press Democrat
Paul Gullixson, Press Democrat
Greenbelt Alliance
Accountable Development Coalition
Sonoma County Conservation Action
Sonoma County Transportation and Land Use Coalition
Housing Advocacy Group