



## **PUBLIC CORRESPONDENCE**

The following is public correspondence received by the City Clerk's Office after the posting of the original agenda. Individual contact information has been redacted for privacy. This may *not* be a comprehensive collection of the public correspondence, but staff makes its best effort to include all correspondence received to date.

To send correspondence to the City Council, on matters listed on the agenda please email [PublicComment@losaltosca.gov](mailto:PublicComment@losaltosca.gov)

**From:** [Anne Paulson](#)  
**To:** [Public Comment](#)  
**Subject:** PUBLIC COMMENT AGENDA ITEM 11 - June 28, 2022  
**Date:** Friday, June 24, 2022 10:15:56 AM

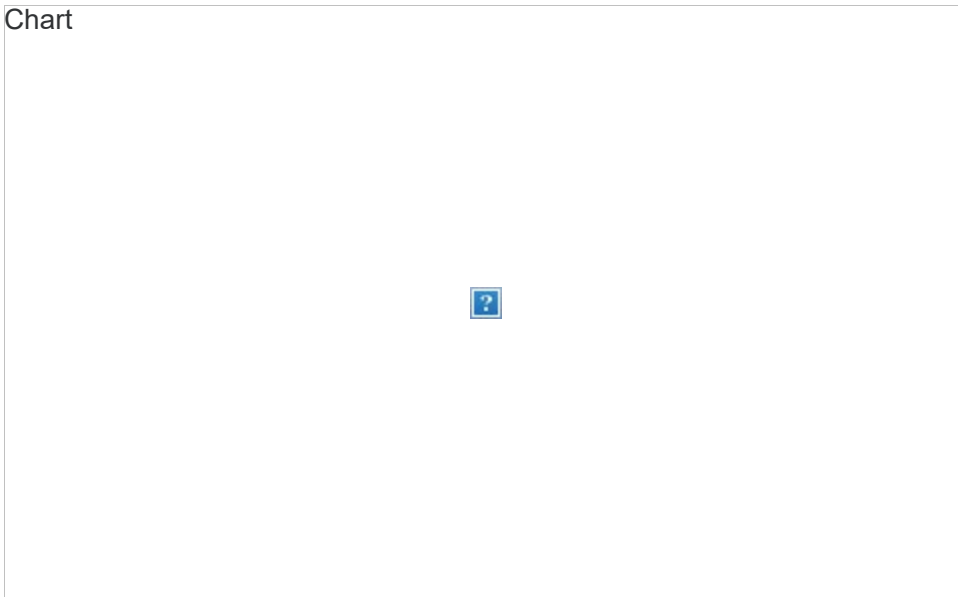
---

Re: Distribution of Inclusionary Units in 355 First Street.

Dear Mayor Enander and City Council,

The size distribution of inclusionary units in 355 First Street does not follow Los Altos' ordinance requiring that inclusionary units "shall not be significantly distinguishable by size" from the market rate units. On average, the inclusionary units are much smaller. As shown by this graph, the below market (BMR) units are mostly one and two bedroom units, whereas the market rate units are mostly two and three bedroom units.

Chart



If the units were distributed as follows:

Unit size	All BMR	Very Low	Moderate
Studio	0	0	0
1 BR	1	0	1
2 BR	4	2	2
3 BR	2	1	1

then the market rate units and the below market units would have similar size distributions, as follows, which would be in conformance with our ordinance.

Chart



The project should be required to follow our ordinance by adjusting the size distribution of the inclusionary units.

Sincerely,

Anne Paulson

**From:** [Jon Baer](#)  
**To:** [Anita Enander](#); [Jonathan Weinberg](#); [Sally Meadows](#); [Lynette Lee Eng](#); [Neysa Fligor](#)  
**Cc:** [Gabriel Engeland](#); [Public Comment](#)  
**Subject:** Agenda Item # 11 355 First Street  
**Date:** Sunday, June 26, 2022 3:24:00 PM

---

City Council- my comments with regard 355 First Street project:

Is it better than the version you reviewed on February 8<sup>th</sup> ? Really no. Is it worse? Perhaps. Have the key items that can and should be addressed been fixed? Nope.

While some in the community may plead for you to approve this project as we need more housing in our City and the City attorney may warn you that not approving it risks a lawsuit, those arguments are not valid reasons to approve this project. This project is flawed and should be denied. Most of the legitimate issues raised at the last council meeting have been ignored-the applicant is basically daring you to deny the project. Deny it.

What is wrong with this project:

1. The design does not minimize mass and bulk. The revised exterior wood cladding actually increased the mass and bulk at Whitney and First and further emphasizes that corner. It also fails to minimize the focal point being at Whitney and First, which was one of the city council objections. The condition of approval of having the Community Development Director work with the applicant to remedy planning commission and city council objections is unacceptable.
2. The right side of the building has windows and balconies that are 3 feet from the property line. Another building will get constructed and it will render those balconies and windows essentially useless for air and light. And it will create privacy issues. There should be no windows or balconies on the right side of the building unless the building façade has a more generous setback from the property line.
3. The courtyard is nothing more than a light well in the center of the building. It is a joke- tenement buildings on the lower east side of New York provided more light and air than what is being provided here.
4. The entrance is not human scale. It can and should be modified to be human scale. This alone is basis for denial of this project. It is irrelevant if the applicant thinks the current design is the most pleasing. It has to be of human scale. End of discussion
5. While extending the lower floors to give the upper floors a greater perception of setback is a clever trick, it does not address the fundamental problem. There already is minimal setback from the street, so the lower floors should not be allowed to be extended out. Doing this does not reduce the appearance of mass and bulk, despite what staff and applicant profess.
6. Adding another BMR unit, while good, does not address the fundamental issue that we require BMR units to be spread out within a building. Take the additional BMR unit, but enforce our requirement.
7. It is sheer nonsense that the roof deck is necessary for the project to be feasible. A well designed courtyard would provide a far more appealing and useful amenity. All the roof deck does is add additional height, mass and bulk to the building.
8. The overall design as well as individual elements such as balcony railings and windows continue to give the building an industrial look, not a residential feel compatible with surrounding buildings.

I am not against more well-designed housing along First Street. This project as currently proposed

represents poor architectural choices, does not meet our guidelines and is not compatible with the downtown.



June 26, 2022

Mayor Enander and Members of the City Council  
City of Los Altos  
1 N. San Antonio Road  
Los Altos, CA 94022

Re: Council Meeting June 28, 2022, Item #11 – 355 First Street

Dear Mayor Enander and Members of the City Council:

As we stated in February, the League of Women Voters supports urban infill developments such as the proposed 355 First Street complex. Its additional 50 residential units will help us reach our RHNA goals in a way that fulfills the Downtown Vision. The project is recommended by both the Complete Streets Commission and the Planning Commission.

However, we do not agree with the Staff that the BMR unit mix reflects the bedroom mix of the entire project. Out of nine studio and one-bedroom units, four are proposed as BMRs, while out of a total of forty-one two and three-bedroom units, only three are proposed to be BMRs. We would like this discrepancy to be corrected, along with relocating the BMRs— per Staff’s direction.

The Housing Element includes programs to reduce constraints on housing development. This project reflects the slow and inconsistent approval process that many developers have complained about. In addition, 355 First Street reinforces the importance of Council and Planning Commission considering only objective standards. The City Attorney pointed out that much of the Council direction on February 8<sup>th</sup> was not legally permissible and that many of the Council comments were clearly subjective and should be eliminated under the new Housing Element. Some examples of this include:

- #13 “building appears to be the least pleasant of all the buildings approved on First Street”
- #14 “building design is uninviting”
- #16 “make the entries warm, inviting, village-like and make it Los Altos”

(Please send comments related to this letter to [REDACTED])

Thank you for your consideration,  
Karin Bricker, President LWV of Los Altos Mountain View

cc: Gabriel Engeland      Nick Zornes      Sean Gallegos.      Jolie Houston      Angel Rodriguez