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A P P E A R A N C E S:

Los Gatos Planning Commissioners:	Steve Raspe, Chair Emily Thomas, Vice Chair Jeffrey Barnett Susan Burnett Melanie Hanssen
Town Manager:	Chris Constantin
Community Development Director:	Joel Paulson
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P R O C E E D I N G S :

CHAIR RASPE: Turning now to Item 3, requesting approval of a Planned Development for demolition of a senior living community, construction of a new senior living community, removal of large, protected trees, and site improvements requiring a Grading Permit on property zoned R: PD. Located at 110 Wood Road, APN 510-47-038. An Environmental Impact Report, Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program and modified CEQA Checklist have been prepared for this project. Planned Development Application PD-20-001 and Environmental Impact Report EIR-21-002. The Applicant is Frank Rockwood, and the property owner is Front Porch Communities.

By a show of hands, Commissioners, can I see all those who have visited the site? Are there any disclosures? Seeing none, Mr. Mullin, when you get back to your chair you can provide us with a Staff Report. Thank you.

SEAN MULLIN: Thank you, and good evening. The subject property is approximately 10.84 acres and is the home of the Los Gatos Meadows senior community, which operated from 1971 until 2019.

1           The proposed Planned Development before you  
2 tonight would allow for demolition of all existing  
3 buildings onsite; construction of a new full-service senior  
4 living facility with 187 independent living units and 24  
5 supportive care units; removal of approximately 192 trees,  
6 including eight large, protected trees; and site  
7 improvements requiring a Grading Permit.

8           On January 12, 2022 the Planning Commission  
9 considered the application and forwarded a recommendation  
10 of denial to the Council based on concerns related to  
11 building heights, tree removal, lack of diversity in  
12 housing type, concentration of luxury units, and ratio of  
13 the number of units to the overall height, which was noted  
14 as being greater than existing.

15           On April 5, 2022 the Town Council considered the  
16 application and ultimately remanded it back to the Planning  
17 Commission for further discussion with consideration of  
18 comments provided by the Town Council, including concern  
19 with proposed heights, tall wall planes, and lack of  
20 screening. Appreciative of the Applicant's regard for fire  
21 safety, there were two options provided at that meeting and  
22 there was preference for Options A and B, supported removal  
23 of the penthouse units, not supportive of removing parking  
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1 to reduce grading, and providing a full set of drawings and  
2 details for the revised project.

3           On October 25, 2023 the Planning Commission  
4 conducted a study session on a revised proposal presented  
5 in a conceptual fashion. During the study session the  
6 Commission noted the positive aspects of the revised  
7 conceptual project, including the reduction in grading, the  
8 elimination of the penthouse units, and potential offsite  
9 programming at 142 South Santa Cruz Avenue as a community  
10 benefit.

11           The Commission also expressed concerns on aspects  
12 of the revised conceptual project, including overall  
13 height, and noted that the Applicant should consider  
14 expanding the development pad to lower the height of the  
15 buildings, concern with visibility impacts when viewed from  
16 downtown and from neighboring residences along Wood Road,  
17 and the unit size and target of the luxury market.

18           The Applicant now returns and presents a revised  
19 project for your consideration. The development pad area  
20 remains consistent with previous iterations. As detailed in  
21 the Staff Report, building height has been redistributed  
22 amongst the buildings with three villas increasing in  
23 height and two decreasing in height. The Applicant  
24 indicates that the intent of the height redistribution is  
25

1 to reduce visual impacts of the project. The revised  
2 project no longer includes penthouses, helping to reduce  
3 the average size of the units. The number of independent  
4 living units has increased from 174 to 187, and the number  
5 of supportive care units has increased from 17 to 24.

6           The revised project includes a reduction in  
7 grading of approximately 11,500 cubic yards. This is a  
8 result of reducing the size of the parking garages, and the  
9 parking plan has been revised to include additional tandem  
10 spots and a reduction of standard spaces, allowing for an  
11 increase in parking from 200 spaces, as previously  
12 proposed, to 214. The materials, architecture, and building  
13 forms remain consistent with previous iterations of the  
14 project.

15           In conclusion, the Planning Commission should  
16 consider whether the revised project adequately responds to  
17 comments and concerns expressed in previous meetings with  
18 the Planning Commission and the Town Council, and based on  
19 the merits of the project the Commission can forward a  
20 recommendation to the Town Council regarding the required  
21 findings, certification of the Final EIR, adoption of the  
22 Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program, and adoption  
23 of the Planned Development Ordinance.  
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1           An addendum and Desk Item has been distributed  
2 before this meeting with additional high-resolution  
3 renderings, Staff response to Commissioner questions, and  
4 additional public comment.

5           This concludes my report and Staff is available  
6 for any questions.

7           CHAIR RASPE: Thank you for that report.  
8 Commissioners, any questions for Staff? Commissioner  
9 Hanssen.

10           COMMISSIONER HANSSEN: I have one question at the  
11 moment, and that is about the Housing Element. The  
12 Applicant in the Staff Report that they can count the units  
13 towards our Housing Element obligation to the State, and I  
14 wondered how that would be the case, maybe because it  
15 doesn't meet the minimum density for the sites that we have  
16 in the Site Inventory, maybe it still counts just in terms  
17 of unit counts, but if you could help me understand it.

18           SEAN MULLIN: Sure, and thank you for that  
19 question. It's been my understanding from the early  
20 iterations of this project that the units do not count as  
21 housing units, so unless something has changed, and I can  
22 defer to the Town Attorney, my understanding is that they  
23 do not count as housing.  
24  
25

1                   DIRECTOR PAULSON: I'll go ahead and jump in.  
2 Joel Paulson, Community Development Director. We are  
3 counting independent living units of these types of  
4 projects as housing, so they have to be independent, they  
5 have to meet a certain definition. The challenge here,  
6 which we'd have to look into further, is we'd have to look  
7 to see what the delta is of the independent living units  
8 from the previous project to this project, and whether or  
9 not, given the time frame of closure, there would be any  
10 deference given to the Town to count units that we  
11 previously would not be able to.

13                   COMMISSIONER HANSEN: Could I ask a follow-up  
14 question? What I think I heard you say is that we can count  
15 the independent living units, however, because this was a  
16 preexisting building that had a number of units that we  
17 have the no net loss to consider. I mean, it would have to  
18 be more units than we had before, is that what you're  
19 saying?

20                   DIRECTOR PAULSON: Thank you for the question. No  
21 net loss is a Housing Element nuance which I wouldn't count  
22 as this scenario, because this is not a sites inventory  
23 site for our Housing Element, but I don't recall off the  
24 top of my head—I could pull the Staff Report up—how many  
25 independent living units were in the existing facility

1 prior to its closing versus what is proposed now. We could  
2 potentially count at a minimum the delta in above-moderate  
3 category.

4 COMMISSIONER HANSSEN: Even though the existing  
5 facility has been vacant for some time, it still counts as  
6 incremental units?

7 DIRECTOR PAULSON: That's the other caveat that  
8 we probably would question HCD on to see if we were able to  
9 count all of them rather than doing the delta version, the  
10 change in units version, that I know that we are permitted  
11 to do.

12 COMMISSIONER HANSSEN: Okay, so it's complicated.

13 CHAIR RASPE: Thank you for that. Vice Chair  
14 Thomas.

15 VICE CHAIR THOMAS: Just as a follow-up. Best  
16 case scenario we hopefully can count a couple units, but we  
17 should not base any decision-making hoping that that is the  
18 case.  
19

20 DIRECTOR PAULSON: You're free to base your  
21 decision-making on whatever criteria you deem fit. What I  
22 would say is that ultimately, again, these are above-  
23 moderate units; we're not likely to be deficient in those  
24 types of units given the types of projects we typically  
25 see.



1 VICE CHAIR THOMAS: Thank you.

2 CHAIR RASPE: Thank you. Any other questions for  
3 Staff? Commissioner Barnett.

4 COMMISSIONER BARNETT: There are a large number  
5 of proposed Conditions of Approval that relate to fire  
6 safety and wildlife safety, and my questions is would the  
7 County Fire be approving the final plans?

8 SEAN MULLIN: Thank you for that question. What  
9 is in front of you this evening is a Planned Develop, which  
10 provides the entitlement for the Applicant, should there be  
11 an approval at the Council level, to submit plans for their  
12 full Architecture and Site, which is a separate planning  
13 process, and then ultimately a Building Permit in the  
14 distant future.

15 The Planned Development though has been reviewed,  
16 and these plans have been reviewed and approved, by the  
17 Santa Clara Fire Department. They would look at them again  
18 under the Architecture and Site application, and again  
19 under the Building Permit application, to make sure that  
20 they stay in compliance with current law.

21 COMMISSIONER BARNETT: Thanks for that, and it's  
22 good to hear.

23 CHAIR RASPE: Okay, thank you. Any other  
24 questions for Staff? No. I'll then invite the Applicant

1 forward; I think it's Mr. Rockwood. If you'll come to the  
2 podium, and you'll have five minutes to speak, sir.

3 FRANK ROCKWOOD: My name is Frank Rockwood. After  
4 prior efforts were shelved in 2008 the owner of Los Gatos  
5 Meadows restarted the process of planning for the rebuild  
6 of the community in 2018.

7 Front Porch's level of investment and community  
8 engagement activities has been high, in fact, substantially  
9 higher than any other project I've ever worked on in my 30-  
10 plus years in real estate development.

11 Here's what we're hearing from the broader  
12 community: There is support for a senior living community  
13 at this location. There is an appreciation of the improved  
14 fire life safety attributes of the proposed project. There  
15 is a request that Front Porch provide services and support  
16 for seniors in Los Gatos beyond those living on campus. And  
17 while community members have expressed a wide range of  
18 concerns typical to development of this nature, the primary  
19 focus of their concern has been related to building mass  
20 and the potential impacts to view lines.

21 To focus specifically on this issue, I introduce  
22 our project architect, Dave Hovlan with Perkins Eastman.  
23  
24  
25

1           DAVE HOVLAN: Good evening. The redesign of Los  
2 Gatos Meadows has been inspired by the variegated nature of  
3 the nature and the live oaks on the property.

4           The materials are metal siding, precast concrete,  
5 and stone cladding over a fire-resistant concrete  
6 structure. The materials colors are generally organic and  
7 darker in nature than the existing buildings, which are  
8 beige and white roofs, with the intent to blend more into  
9 the hillside.

10           The proposed design creates a village feel with  
11 eight villa buildings and a total of 187 units. The villas  
12 are tucked into the hillside with a continuous underground  
13 base that contains adequate parking, services, and  
14 community space. The villas rise from that base three  
15 stories in the front and up to six stories in the rear near  
16 the hillside.

17           It's an unusual and challenging site steeply  
18 sloped across the building pad of almost 90' with the  
19 preserved oak woodland at the top. Also, a fairly secluded  
20 location accessed by Wood Road, which is well vegetated.

21           As the Planning Commission suggested, we have  
22 gone back and looked at expanding the building development  
23 area. Those options destroyed the existing tree cover,  
24  
25

1 brought us closer to neighbors, and created access and  
2 extensive retaining walls and compromised fire safety.

3 We strongly believe that retaining the existing  
4 development pad is critical. With regard to visual impacts,  
5 there are multiple and competing perspectives and views. We  
6 have worked hard over the past years to address Town and  
7 neighbor concerns while creating a financially sustainable  
8 project.

9  
10 We have reduced the height of Villas B and C by  
11 one floor and stepped Villa A back at the front where it is  
12 most visible from Main Street. We determined since the last  
13 meeting that raising Villas F and G would unduly impact  
14 residents on Wood Road. It's important to note that our  
15 proposed tallest six-story villa is below the elevation of  
16 Wood Road behind our site.

17 In summary, we have shifted and tucked more of  
18 the development into the hillside, including linking Villas  
19 D and E and F and G, and we have tried to be good listeners  
20 to the neighbors, balancing their concerns while creating a  
21 financially sustainable and vital community in Los Gatos.  
22 Thank you.

23 CHAIR RASPE: Thank you. Sir, before you sit  
24 down, or perhaps Mr. Rockwood. Are you still speaking? I  
25

1 didn't mean to interrupt. One more minute and three  
2 seconds.

3 MARY McMULLIN: Thank you. Good evening, I'm Mary  
4 McMullin, Chief Advancement Officer for Front Porch.

5 I just want to convince you more than ever that  
6 Front Porch is a strong community neighbor. We are involved  
7 for the long run and for broader community benefit.

8 We continue to invest in Los Gatos. In addition  
9 to this site in question, we have purchased 142 South Santa  
10 Cruz Avenue for additional programs that benefit the entire  
11 town. To address social isolation, a program free of charge  
12 called Well Connected; and housing security, another  
13 program free of charge called Home Match.

14 Tonight, we are here to discuss our plan for a  
15 new community. The current plan that we're talking about  
16 tonight is the minimum scale that we need to make it work  
17 financially. On balance, this rebuild will be a significant  
18 contribution to the Town, a valuable asset to the  
19 community, and we see it as the best use of the property  
20 and request your swift action. We are ready to move  
21 forward.  
22

23 CHAIR RASPE: Before the Applicant sits down, one  
24 or all three of you, Commissioners, any questions for the  
25 Applicant? Commissioner Hanssen.

1                   COMMISSIONER HANSSEN: I wanted to key in on  
2 something that you or one of the speakers had mentioned; I  
3 think it was the second.

4                   I think one of the objections that we had in  
5 previous hearings—and I was at all of them—was the height.  
6 The tallest building is still at 97', and there are two  
7 questions in here.

8                   The other thing is with the video rendering there  
9 were some neighbors that weighed in and said it's really  
10 hard to assess this, and I noticed that there were some  
11 people that had commented on the last application that  
12 didn't, so because there are no story poles they might not  
13 know that this is out there, so maybe you could just  
14 reiterate.

15                   These taller buildings, I saw the pictures of  
16 before and after in the Staff Report from the front view,  
17 but the back view, there aren't going to be neighbors  
18 behind seeing the building in their view line because you  
19 put it right up against the hill where the trees are, is  
20 that correct? Maybe you could explain. There is more than  
21 one building that was over 90' right?

22                   DAVE HOVLAN: Yes, on the back of the site, and  
23 as you just stated, we're only about 25' higher than the  
24 hill behind us, so we're kind of scooping out the backside  
25

1 of the hill, and two stories of those six-story buildings  
2 are actually built into the ground, so there are no units  
3 or windows on the back side of that. And as I said, Wood  
4 Road is actually above the highest building that we have at  
5 the back of our site.

6 COMMISSIONER HANSSEN: Because of the slope,  
7 because of the property?

8 DAVE HOVLAN: Because of the slope, yes.

9 COMMISSIONER HANSSEN: Okay. So, the things that  
10 we were seeing the last time where people were looking out  
11 their window—I guess we'll hear public testimony—and seeing  
12 things grow, that's not going to happen because of the way  
13 you reoriented the buildings?

14 DAVE HOVLAN: The renderings that our team has  
15 prepared, and as Frank has said, I've been meeting with  
16 numerous neighbors to go through exactly views from their  
17 living rooms, their porches, and so those are the  
18 renderings I believe you're referring to; I'm not aware of  
19 other renderings other than the ones our team has provided.  
20

21 FRANK ROCKWOOD: We have our visualization  
22 consultant available to comment on this and share visuals  
23 if you like; he's available online.  
24

25

1                   COMMISSIONER HANSSEN: Let's hear from the  
2 public, and then if it doesn't come up then we'll ask  
3 again.

4                   CHAIR RASPE: Thank you. Commissioner Barnett.

5                   COMMISSIONER BARNETT: Perhaps the architect can  
6 address this question. On the plans the elevation from the  
7 ground floor to the first floor is 17', and I was wondering  
8 if there is a reason that couldn't be lowered?

9                   DAVE HOVLAN: That is our garage level, so it's  
10 both our garage and our distribution system for all our  
11 mechanical and plumbing system, because everything has to  
12 come down, and then in the ceiling of that garage is where  
13 we distribute everything horizontally.

14                   We also have some fairly extensive deep concrete  
15 beams, because we're a concrete structure above that, not  
16 wood frame, so we're carrying a much heavier load coming  
17 down onto that podium base.

18                   COMMISSIONER BARNETT: From a practical,  
19 architectural, and structural perspective, that can't be  
20 reduced to below 17'?

21                   DAVE HOVLAN: At this point, that's our position.  
22 We will obviously work extensively to do anything we can in  
23 the future but based on our engineering work and everything  
24 that we have at this point, which is still early and  
25



1 preliminary, we don't believe that we can reduce it below  
2 that.

3 I should also clarify, because on top of that  
4 podium is also two courtyards, so we have weatherproofing,  
5 and we've got soil that we're holding up for trees and  
6 landscape as well.

7 COMMISSIONER BARNETT: Can you tell me the height  
8 of the garage from someone who is standing on the garage  
9 floor to the ceiling?  
10

11 DAVE HOVLAN: There probably won't be a finished  
12 ceiling, but there will be pipes running through, so our  
13 expectation is that we would have about 9' to about 9.5'  
14 clear, but it will vary in different parts of the garage.

15 COMMISSIONER BARNETT: I see. Fair enough. Thank  
16 you.

17 CHAIR RASPE: Thank you. Commissioners, any other  
18 questions for the Applicant? I had just a couple, and  
19 whoever is most appropriate can respond.

20 First, and I think the architect addressed this  
21 in his comments. The building envelope, we had requested as  
22 perhaps an alternative and as a means to reducing overall  
23 building height, was spreading out into the site a little  
24 bit more, and I think you indicated that that was less  
25 feasible, or infeasible, but I just wanted to explore that

1 a little bit more. I understand you're trying to preserve  
2 as much of the green space as you can, but how infeasible  
3 is it to spread the building envelope?

4           DAVE HOVLAN: I was hoping we could pull out the  
5 site plan that has the fire truck access loop, because it's  
6 the most current.

7           CHAIR RASPE: If that's helpful, yes.

8           DAVE HOVLAN: While that's being prepared, you  
9 know it's an irregular shaped site. I'm going to use the  
10 top of the drawing to be north, although it's not exactly  
11 north, but as you can see the fire truck access loop is the  
12 red line that goes all the way around, so if you look to  
13 project west, we are nestled very close to Wood Road. As a  
14 matter of fact, we have a mix of retaining walls and  
15 grading in there, so there is really no place to develop to  
16 the west. As a matter of fact, that would push us into more  
17 of the view corridor as you come up Wood Road.

18           If you look to project south on the drawing you  
19 can see, again, the fire truck access. That road also has a  
20 retaining wall; it's roughly in the same position as the  
21 existing Fairwall Drive, but not exactly, but we've widened  
22 it to be a full fire truck access.  
23

24           If you look to the project east, one of the  
25 requirements was to have a continuous fire truck loop

1 around the site, so what is done to the east part of the  
2 site is to get the grading to get that firetruck, if you  
3 can imagine that, up 80' and around to loop up with the  
4 upper drive. I have filled out the full development pad. We  
5 did look to the south of the fire truck road in that little  
6 wedge, but between the setback and the driveway it varies  
7 from about 25' to maybe about 60', but it's 30' down—if you  
8 know that site, it drops like in a 2:1 slope—and we did  
9 study it but we could not get fire truck access around the  
10 buildings. We would have 30' high retaining walls. If you  
11 think of those cottages that are roughly in that position,  
12 they're up on 20' and 25' stilts, so it kind of gives you a  
13 feel for what would happen in there.

14  
15           Then the other thing was to actually build it  
16 we'd have to take all the trees down, and the easement to  
17 be able to get all the grading in, we'd probably be looking  
18 at a grading easement.

19           CHAIR RASPE: Thank you for that very thorough  
20 answer, and I have just a couple more questions then.

21           In response to Commissioner Hanssen's questions,  
22 you discussed the reconfiguration of Villa A, pushing some  
23 of the massing to the back, and I think your comment was to  
24 help with some of the view corridors, which I will agree  
25 with you; I think that is our biggest issue in this

1 development. Does that move help the residents on Wood Road  
2 more? Does it help the view from downtown Los Gatos more?  
3 Whose views was that move intended to protect?

4           DAVE HOVLAN: The feathering and pushing back of  
5 Villa A were in response to the views from Main Street, and  
6 so we have lowered it so that we're about 11' higher than  
7 the front of the existing building that's there.

8           CHAIR RASPE: Very good. Just one generalized  
9 question, and I'm going to have to ask you to trust me on  
10 some numbers here. My understanding is that based on the  
11 original development there were approximately 205 units in  
12 the complex, and your current proposal seeks about 211  
13 overall of the very different varieties.

14           DAVE HOVLAN: I believe there were 184 plus.  
15 There were 222 units prior when you include the care units.

16           CHAIR RASPE: Right. In any event, they're within  
17 distance of each other, a little over 200 units in each  
18 development.

19           The original project was on a gross square  
20 footage basis, a little over 150,000 square feet, and the  
21 new project as I see it is a little over 438,000 square  
22 feet, so roughly three times the size. What I'm curious  
23 about is where is the extra square footage going if we have  
24 almost similar numbers of unit? I guess it either has to go  
25

1 to common areas, or we're using much larger units, or some  
2 combination of the two.

3           DAVE HOVLAN: In fact, it's probably both, but it  
4 is principally in the independent living units. When this  
5 was originally conceived in the last sixties and built in  
6 the early seventies the standards for senior living were  
7 very, very different than people's expectations now of  
8 having a full independent living unit, accessible  
9 bathrooms, full kitchen, all the amenities that older  
10 adults want.

11           CHAIR RASPE: I think the Staff Report indicates  
12 that the average unit size of your proposal is about 1,400  
13 square feet. Does that sound right?

14           DAVE HOVLAN: Yes, that is approximately correct.

15           CHAIR RASPE: I tried to do some research to  
16 figure out what is the custom or norm for luxury senior  
17 housing specifications, and honestly, I got more answers  
18 than I can possibly use. I'm looking for your insight, from  
19 you for the operator. What is the custom and norm for one-  
20 and two-bedrooms in what we call the luxury senior market?

21           DAVE HOVLAN: Several part answer on this. It  
22 depends on the market. It depends on where we are in the  
23 country, and what people's expectations are about size and  
24 unit. We've also seen with the retirement of the baby  
25

1 boomers and the next generation of expectations that people  
2 don't want just a one-bedroom unit anymore; they want two  
3 bedrooms. They want a place to have a study, a workspace, a  
4 guest room, however they may use that bonus room. So, what  
5 we have seen is that the average size of units over the  
6 last two decades has continued to grow, and I would say  
7 that the average—again, this is different places in the  
8 country—probably range anywhere from about 1,300 to 1,500  
9 square feet is the average size unit.  
10

11 But a difference that skews that percentage is  
12 how many one-bedroom apartments versus two-bedroom  
13 apartments, and we had more significant one-bedroom dens in  
14 two-bedroom units here, because of the market expectation  
15 of what people in Los Gatos want.

16 CHAIR RASPE: Very good. I'm sorry, one final  
17 question. Commissioner Barnett asked you about the parking  
18 garage floor-to-ceiling heights. In the living spaces what  
19 is your floor plate height?

20 DAVE HOVLAN: It's an 11.5' floor-to-floor in  
21 several of the buildings and 11" in the others, so we're  
22 hoping to have a 10' or 9.5' finished ceiling, but again,  
23 until we get into the detail in the structure and the  
24 beams, there's still a little work there.  
25

1 CHAIR RASPE: I appreciate it. I appreciate your  
2 willingness to answer my technical questions on the fly.  
3 Thank you so much. Commissioner Burnett.

4 COMMISSIONER BURNETT: Yes, thank you. And thank  
5 you, I think your design is really beautiful; I think it's  
6 very pleasing.

7 I did want to ask, the proposed photo going down  
8 Main Street there, the color of the building, is that what  
9 you're intending that to be?

10 DAVE HOVLAN: Yes. I think as you've seen in the  
11 renderings there, they're more muted tones.

12 COMMISSIONER BURNETT: Yes.

13 DAVE HOVLAN: Their natural color is greens,  
14 blues, browns, no beige, no light green, no white roofs. We  
15 definitely want this to nestle into the hills, and really  
16 as much as we can make it just disappear into the tree  
17 setting in the hillside.

18 COMMISSIONER BURNETT: Yes, that's a very, very  
19 important feature. Thank you.

20 CHAIR RASPE: Thank you. Commissioner Hanssen.

21 COMMISSIONER HANSSEN: I noticed in the Staff  
22 Report and from the last time we saw this, because you have  
23 the stat from the original Meadows versus the current  
24 proposal, but I'm talking the last time we saw this, either  
25

1 the study session or the time before, I'm not sure when we  
2 actually had a hearing.

3           It says here the revised submittal also includes  
4 changes in the number of units and unit types, (inaudible)  
5 the independent living units would increase from 174 to 187  
6 through elimination of the penthouse units and the  
7 redistribution of the one- to two-bedroom units.

8           My question is since the height was an issue, why  
9 does the number of additional units go up? If there were an  
10 opportunity to reduce height by not increasing the units,  
11 why are there more units just because of eliminating the  
12 penthouse units?  
13

14           DAVE HOVLAN: I think there are several answers  
15 to that.

16           One is as the project has evolved so has the  
17 financial feasibility, and I think that has been part of  
18 guiding the sort of look at this.

19           The other issue that was guiding it was that what  
20 we look at is the usable and rentable square footage that  
21 the people are living in regardless of the common areas  
22 that don't produce revenue. So, when we took 2,000 square  
23 foot units and made them 1,400 or 1,500, what we had is a  
24 square footage that we still needed the revenue from that  
25



1 square footage, but it generated more units because we made  
2 them smaller.

3 COMMISSIONER HANSSEN: Okay.

4 CHAIR RASPE: Thank you. Commissioners, any other  
5 questions for the Applicants? You'll have an opportunity at  
6 the end to speak again. We'll now address members of the  
7 public in the chambers first and in no particular order.

8 Rob Stump, if you would like to approach the  
9 podium, state your name, and you have three minutes.

10 ROB STUMP: Thanks for the opportunity to address  
11 you this evening about the proposed senior living community  
12 at 110 Wood Road. My name is Rob Stump, a resident of Los  
13 Gatos, 17617 Foster road

14 Since 2019 I've been working with the Town of Los  
15 Gatos on wildfire preparation and prevention. In 2020 I was  
16 appointed the chair of an ad hoc Wildfire Committee that  
17 was authorized by the Town Council. I've become known as a  
18 public safety advocate with an emphasis on wildfire  
19 prevention. I'm known by many of the Town's Staff and  
20 Councilmembers. I've worked with the Police Department and  
21 the Fire Department. I've developed relationships with them  
22 over that period of time and a level of expertise on the  
23 topic of wildfire. Tonight, I'm limiting my comments to  
24 wildfire mitigation measures.  
25

1 I was asked to meet with the developer of this  
2 project on two occasions over the past couple of years.  
3 Why? To discuss this project and to get my input on their  
4 efforts to make this senior community wildfire resistant.  
5 Here are my comments.

6 First, building construction. You've already  
7 heard what's going to be going into the building  
8 construction, wood being replaced by concrete and steel.  
9 This will be fire resistant. The building materials are far  
10 superior to the ones that were used when this project was  
11 originally developed. This is a critical element should  
12 fire blow into the development.  
13

14 Second, tree removal and forest management. One  
15 hundred and ninety-two trees will be removed, trees with  
16 tall canopies and too close to structures; and frankly,  
17 some trees, being flammable, will be removed for fire  
18 safety and public safety in general. The landscape plan for  
19 the new development calls for more trees to be planted than  
20 what will be removed. The species of the trees obviously  
21 will be different, including the height of the lower  
22 canopy. They will be a better choice for the development in  
23 the Wildfire Urban Interface.  
24

25 There are five acres of open spaces you've been  
talking about primarily forested with oaks and other native

1 trees. I strongly encourage this community to aggressively  
2 manage this forest, and what do I mean by that? Keep the  
3 forest floor clear, remove weeds, and limb-up the trees.

4 Third, defensible space. Due to the design of  
5 this development, it's going to sound strange, gang, but it  
6 may serve as a fire break to South Santa Cruz Avenue and  
7 some of the residences on Broadway. With the new building  
8 standards, the reduced number of tall trees, some of which  
9 I've said are flammable, and the access road around the  
10 entire development, fire services will not only have  
11 defensible space around the development, but they will also  
12 have access to fight a fire before it proceeds into  
13 neighborhoods or the downtown.

15 I believe the developer has taken appropriate  
16 steps to limit potential impacts due to wildfire for this  
17 development, and they've provided additional protection for  
18 the neighbors. I look forward to this development being  
19 developed. We do need more senior housing and options in  
20 Los Gatos. Thank you.

21 CHAIR RASPE: Thank you, Mr. Stump. Before you  
22 sit down, sir, any questions? Vice Chair Thomas.

23 VICE CHAIR THOMAS: Thank you for your comments  
24 tonight and all your work you've done to protect the  
25 community. My question is whether you've looked at some of

1 the trees that are proposed to be planted, and how you feel  
2 about some of the landscaping?

3           ROB STUMP: The only question I've really asked  
4 is are they going to be on the list of trees and plantings  
5 that fall into the fire-resistant category? Nothing is  
6 completely resistant of fire, but not eucalyptus trees and  
7 these other things that would fall into the category of  
8 flammable, so I've asked that specific question, being more  
9 like ornamentals like crepe myrtles, things that are  
10 flowering trees, things that will have limited canopy, so  
11 that by definition you're not going to get fire way up in a  
12 canopy that's literally as high as some of the buildings  
13 that are out there.

14           VICE CHAIR THOMAS: Okay, thank you.

15           CHAIR RASPE: Thank you. Any other questions? I  
16 just have one, sir. I think you probably heard my question  
17 to the architect on whether the building envelope could be  
18 expanded, and one of his responses was that would impede  
19 ingress and egress of fire vehicles, and I was wondering if  
20 you had any thoughts on that?

21           ROB STUMP: The road to build may become more  
22 complicated, I think is one of the things they're saying,  
23 if they would move up the hill. It could be incredibly  
24 expensive, more challenging, greater numbers of retaining  
25

1 walls, but I can tell you in talking to Fire, they are  
2 thrilled with this plan that they have a complete loop  
3 around the development, and again, when you look at that  
4 and the map that was up there, I'll say that it's obviously  
5 more west than north, but that is what is actually going to  
6 provide defensible space as well and allow the Fire  
7 Department...

8  
9 If you can believe it, they may not really be  
10 fighting a fire at the development, they may be fighting a  
11 fire up the hill and trying to keep it from coming to the  
12 development, coming down into the neighborhood, so I don't  
13 have a great answer for you there. I think that may be more  
14 of an issue of expanding that road and what it would  
15 require to expand that road farther up the hillside.

16 CHAIR RASPE: I appreciate your honesty, as well  
17 as your other thoughts on the matter. Thank you so much.

18 ROB STUMP: Thank you very much.

19 CHAIR RASPE: No further questions then. Our next  
20 speaker, Julie Southern. Ms. Southern, if you would  
21 approach the podium and state your name for the record,  
22 please, and you'll have three minutes

23  
24 JULIE SOUTHERN: Hello, I'm Julie Southern. I'm  
25 at 135 Wood Road in Los Gatos; I've been on Wood Road for  
37 years. I sent my letter in; I believe I'm in your

1 packet. I just want to touch on four points that I have in  
2 my letter.

3 I first want to thank the Meadows for being such  
4 good neighbors in the past, as well as with all hope in the  
5 future.

6 One of the four points that I wanted to point out  
7 in my letter was the impact on the view from my property.  
8 When we came through, I believe it was this last April when  
9 the story poles went up, it showed a lot of attention from  
10 the Town and got a lot of input. I've been involved in  
11 2016-2018 since I moved to the road in 1987.

12 They were concerned about the bulk. They were  
13 asked to redistribute. They redistributed; they moved it to  
14 the back, which is literally right in front of my house. So  
15 those buildings, which I believe are Buildings F and A,  
16 instead of being three or four stories, they're now five  
17 and six stories, and that's from my second story deck. From  
18 my front door I feel that I'm going to be looking at a  
19 wall. I know that the architect did mention that all the  
20 stories are going to be below Wood Road, but Wood Road is  
21 like that (indicates a 45-degree angle) in front of my  
22 house, so it may be way over to the side.

23  
24  
25 Second point is the preservation of the trees. I  
understand the fire danger. I had a house on Wood Road that

1 did burn down, and while they were evacuating the Meadows  
2 at the time they let my house burn, so I am all for  
3 anything. That circular road, I think it's wonderful, and  
4 that they've kept Farwell Road open for emergency vehicles  
5 and potential Wood Road resident access in an emergency.  
6 But the preservation and enhancement of the screening trees  
7 would be great, at least so that there is mitigation of as  
8 much of the bulk from our vantage point.

9  
10 Third is the proper handling of harmful chemicals  
11 and materials. In our neighborhood meeting last week they  
12 said it was the responsibility of the builder. I know that  
13 that was brought out in the newspaper a couple of months  
14 ago. I just want to reiterate that we're going to be living  
15 on that road for the four years that they're going to be  
16 demolishing it and rebuilding it and I just want to make  
17 sure of whatever mitigation they can do for that.

18 Fourth point is traffic management during  
19 construction. Coming off Wood Road today with the half  
20 dozen or dozen residents that are there now is really bad,  
21 and so you guys all know the challenges of Wood Road as it  
22 is today.

23 CHAIR RASPE: Thank you for those comments.  
24 Before you sit, Commissioners may have comments. Vice Chair  
25 Thomas.

1 VICE CHAIR THOMAS: Thank you for coming and  
2 sharing with us tonight, and for being patient over the  
3 years, and working with the Applicant.

4 For your point four, your concern is traffic  
5 during construction specifically.

6 JULIE SOUTHERN: Yes. When the Meadows was there,  
7 they were always carting residents up and down the hill, so  
8 they did as much mitigation of traffic at that time, but as  
9 Los Gatos is growing and Los Gatos High is getting bigger  
10 and more populated, we're seeing a lot more traffic coming  
11 in from the mountains, and from 7:00 to 7:45 it's just  
12 stopped. When I come down, I either have to leave before  
13 7:00 or I have to leave after 8:00.

14 VICE CHAIR THOMAS: Okay, thank you.

15 JULIE SOUTHERN: Does that make sense?

16 VICE CHAIR THOMAS: Yes, I was just confirming  
17 that it was construction, not after the project is there.  
18 It's mainly during construction.

19 JULIE SOUTHERN: The construction is going to be  
20 challenging, because we're going to be limited, because  
21 they're going to be taking hundreds of trucks.

22 VICE CHAIR THOMAS: Thank you. We talked  
23 extensively about it the last time we heard this. Okay,  
24 thank you.



1 CHAIR RASPE: Thank you. Commissioner Hanssen.

2 COMMISSIONER HANSSEN: I wanted to follow-up on  
3 your question about the view. In the Staff Report the  
4 Applicant submitted a list of all the people they talked  
5 to, and your name was in there, and they didn't have a  
6 rundown of what the outcome of the discussion was, it was  
7 just a list of what people they talked to and what dates.

8  
9 My question for you is this: One of the biggest  
10 issues that we had the last time we saw this was about the  
11 height, and that it's a much higher height that we have  
12 pretty much anywhere in Los Gatos. What has been the  
13 response now that they've done this reallocation of the  
14 height and you've, I'm sure, told them that this is  
15 impacting you, what kind of response did you get from them?

16 JULIE SOUTHERN: Generally polite, that it's a  
17 fiscal decision, and I said, "Would you be open to reducing  
18 the units?" Pretty much no because of the fiscal nature of  
19 it. "Could you redistribute Buildings A and F, that are  
20 five and six stories, back down to four-story and  
21 redistribute it back out to the front, which is where  
22 people from the Town commented about it being bulky? The  
23 comment from one of the individuals on the meeting was, "We  
24 would love that, but I don't think the Town would like  
25 that." Is it the general people from the Town that are

1 going to be upset about having that third story back up to  
2 four stories, or is it going to be three or four residents  
3 whose view is blocked?

4 COMMISSIONER HANSSEN: Thank you for your candid  
5 comments on that. That's something we'll need to talk  
6 about.

7 CHAIR RASPE: Thank you. Any other questions for  
8 this speaker? Commissioner Barnett.

9 COMMISSIONER BARNETT: Can you describe for me  
10 the traffic as you experienced it prior to the demolition  
11 or the vacation of the Meadows? There were cars for  
12 residents as well, as I understand, transportation that was  
13 provided by the Meadows.  
14

15 JULIE SOUTHERN: Right. It's not so much the  
16 traffic on Wood Road; it's getting from Wood Road onto  
17 Santa Cruz Avenue. It's very difficult for me to turn left  
18 onto Santa Cruz between 7:00-7:45 on a school day, for  
19 example.

20 COMMISSIONER BARNETT: We've had a discussion  
21 about that.

22 JULIE SOUTHERN: I won't even talk about beach  
23 traffic. I've parked at the bottom of a hill many times and  
24 walked up just because you can't get... But that's the beach  
25 traffic discussion.

1 COMMISSIONER BARNETT: Okay, I appreciate that.

2 JULIE SOUTHERN: But since they closed there has  
3 been another home built up above, another couple of people  
4 moved up above, so there is more traffic. The home that is  
5 just above us has had a lot of traffic in the last three  
6 years it's been being built; a lot of traffic. We're  
7 anticipating traffic, we know that it's going to be there,  
8 but (inaudible) understand.

9 CHAIR RASPE: Thank you. Any other questions,  
10 Commissioners? No. Thank you so much. You may be seated.  
11 Next, we have a comment card from Clair Southern. Ms.  
12 Southern, if you would approach the podium, state your name  
13 for the record, and you'll have three minutes.

14 CLAIR SOUTHERN: Hi, I'm Clair. Thank you for the  
15 opportunity to speak.

16 I grew up on Wood Road. I watched my home burn  
17 down when I was a child. I also have lived on Wood Road as  
18 an adult, and with regard to the Meadows, there are three  
19 things that I want to reiterate.

20 First is mass. It's a large building and the ask  
21 has been for it to reduce height.

22 Secondly is visualizations matter. As we noted  
23 with story poles the last time this came around, they're  
24 very useful for people to understand the mass and the  
25

1 impact before something is built, before decisions are  
2 made. In lieu of that we have visualizations, which have  
3 been of varying quality, and varying versions have shown  
4 different types of use from the neighbors' view, but also  
5 from downtown. I think they are little bit misleading.

6 Third is safety, and that is regarding traffic  
7 but also fire. Yes, it's not just about is a house built of  
8 wood or cement, it's about can you get down from what is  
9 called a secluded location with one road with lots of  
10 residents and children living above. Thank you.

11  
12 CHAIR RASPE: Thank you so much, and before you  
13 sit, any questions, Commissioners? No. Thank you, again,  
14 for your comments. We appreciate it. Next is Tom Picrow.  
15 Tom, if you would approach the podium, state your name for  
16 the record, and you'll have three minutes.

17 TOM PICROW: My name is Tom Picrow. I am  
18 president of the Los Gatos Foundation for Older Adults to  
19 Thrive Foundation, and I'd like to report that as they  
20 mentioned in the information provided that our Los Gatos  
21 Thrives Executive Committee and members have met with the  
22 developer, both Front Porch and Rockwell Properties,  
23 several times, and we've discussed, as mentioned, these  
24 amenities for the community, such as at 142 South Santa  
25 Cruz Avenue providing our property site there which could

1 be used for community events, for community meetings, and  
2 we think that is very fine; and also their proposal to  
3 bring Home Match into our community, which is something  
4 that we have advocated and very much hoped would happen in  
5 this community for developing things for older adults to  
6 thrive. That's with my hat as the foundation president.

7           On a personal note, from my otherwise  
8 perspective, I'd like to say that I think it's an excellent  
9 development that I hope can happen. Our seniors need places  
10 to live, seniors of all economic levels, and as you get  
11 older you need to size down and you need assistance in  
12 living that's important.

13           I think you probably know the population is  
14 increasing. For the last decade the percentage of seniors  
15 in Los Gatos has nearly doubled; it will be within a year  
16 or two. That population, many of whom have lived here their  
17 entire life, and would like to age in place in Los Gatos,  
18 the town they love, would really appreciate the  
19 opportunities to do that, and this adds to that mix of  
20 different properties we can have in town for seniors.

21           So, I think this is worthy of consideration as  
22 culture thinking about your older adults, as we all reach  
23 that age at some point and your parents or your siblings,  
24 so I would encourage you. Personally, I support the project  
25

1 and I think it would be very good for Los Gatos and for the  
2 work we're trying to do for older adults to thrive in our  
3 community. Thank you.

4 CHAIR RASPE: Thank you for those comments, and  
5 before you have a seat, Commissioner Hanssen.

6 COMMISSIONER HANSSEN: Thank you for your  
7 comments, and I'm glad that we have the Los Gatos Thrives  
8 Foundation; I didn't know about it until I read the Staff  
9 Report.

10  
11 You're probably aware since you lived in Los  
12 Gatos for a long time, that we have any number of Builder's  
13 Remedy proposals in many different places throughout town  
14 going up six or seven stories, and this is something that  
15 is completely unfamiliar for everyone in town; we just  
16 don't have those kinds of heights here.

17 My question for you is since you're representing  
18 the foundation and the feelings of other seniors, does the  
19 importance of having the additional senior units outweigh  
20 going six stories and 97', which is pretty unprecedented  
21 here?

22 TOM PICROW: Our foundation's perspective, I  
23 think would be fair to say, is that if I think about living  
24 in a residential house and having a seven-story apartment  
25 building next door to me on the other side of the fence, or

1 I think about a village of senior living which is self-  
2 contained and beautiful and nicely managed, that there is  
3 no consideration. If I think about building a community  
4 center for all our people in Los Gatos, or I think about a  
5 five-story apartment building right on a major  
6 thoroughfare, I think there is no difference. I favor those  
7 villages and the community center.

8           COMMISSIONER HANSSEN: So, you think the location  
9 helps to mitigate?  
10

11           TOM PICROW: I mean, we have limited space in Los  
12 Gatos, so where could you find a place that would maybe be  
13 more acceptable? I'm not sure.

14           COMMISSIONER HANSSEN: Or it's not going to be  
15 next to a one-story house?

16           TOM PICROW: Yes, for example.

17           COMMISSIONER HANSSEN: Okay, thank you.

18           CHAIR RASPE: Thank you. Are there any other  
19 questions, Commissioners? Thank you, sir. You may sit down.  
20 Our next speaker, Teri Hope. Ms. Hope, if you'll approach  
21 the podium, state your name for the record, and you'll have  
22 three minutes.

23           TERI HOPE: Good evening, I'm Teri Hope; I live  
24 at 223 Casitas in Los Gatos.  
25

1           As a lifelong resident of Los Gatos, a downtown  
2 business owner, and I'm also a board member of the Los  
3 Gatos Foundation for Older Adults to Thrive, the Los Gatos  
4 Meadows rebuild project is of utmost importance to me  
5 personally and, I think, to the community at large. I'm  
6 asking the Planning Commission tonight to please recommend  
7 that the Council approve the rebuild proposal.

8           As I understand it, the project is within the  
9 original footprint of the old campus, nestled into the  
10 hillside, and in keeping with our small-town charm that our  
11 citizens really value.

12           It's important to note the project addresses  
13 several key issues that are also important to Los Gatons:  
14 housing, supporting older adults in our community, and  
15 wildfire safety. This project will revitalize this  
16 dilapidated campus site, addresses the housing shortage for  
17 seniors wanting to remain in our town, as well as  
18 addressing the social integration needs of older adults by  
19 creating a sustainable community where seniors can flourish  
20 in a safe an enriching environment.

21           The Front Porch communities is a nonprofit  
22 sponsor of this project. They have a good track record of  
23 having provided exemplary care to seniors over a half of a  
24 century. The approval of this project will enable many of  
25



1 our seniors, probably including myself, to remain in the  
2 community close to our family and friends.

3 As it stands, the shuttered facility does not  
4 benefit the community, it's a fire hazard, and the planning  
5 process for rebuilding has gone on for many years now, so I  
6 would encourage you to help move this project along now.

7 CHAIR RASPE: Thank you for those comments.  
8 Commissioners, any questions for this speaker? Seeing none,  
9 thank you. Our next speaker, Andy Ghofrani. Mr. Ghofrani,  
10 if you would approach the podium and please state your name  
11 for the record, and you'll have three minutes.

12 ANDY GHOFRANI: Hello, I'm Andy Ghofrani; I live  
13 at 121 Wood Road, directly behind the Meadows.

14 By the previous presentations that I've seen from  
15 the Meadows, I am the most impacted neighbor visually.  
16 Although in this new proposal that we've seen they've  
17 reduced the height of the front buildings, the additional  
18 height in the back added about one or two stories in front  
19 of me, which cut off half my view. I don't have a front  
20 yard, I have a large deck in front of my house, which is  
21 essentially our front yard. We bought the property for that  
22 unobstructed view, so we are really impacted.

23 I am not against construction; I'm in the  
24 construction business for 40 years myself. I support  
25

1 construction in general but want to find a way that it's  
2 the least impactful to us as the most impacted neighbor, so  
3 we're asking to maybe rebalance in such a way so that it's  
4 not... Although the view is nice from the downtown, but it is  
5 right in front of us, a similar issue with Julie Southern.  
6 So that's one ask.

7           The second is traffic during construction. As  
8 mentioned, and I've talked to Frank Rockwood about that,  
9 truck traffic during construction, and I've run numbers, we  
10 will be looking at about 24,000 trucks in and out of that  
11 site in the nine-month excavation that they will have.  
12 Imagine a truck every minute-and-a-half, coming or going,  
13 and this is going to stop all the traffic at Santa Cruz  
14 Avenue.  
15

16           Thank you for listening, and it is a serious  
17 concern.

18           CHAIR RASPE: Thank you. Before you sit down,  
19 Commissioners, any questions? Commissioner Hanssen.

20           COMMISSIONER HANSSEN: Thank you for your  
21 thorough comments. My question for you is this: The current  
22 proposal where they've redistributed versus the last  
23 proposal, I wanted to see was the last proposal better for  
24 you, or not, or were they both bad?  
25

1           ANDY GHOFrani: I would say the last proposal we  
2 saw the story poles, and it was really impactful to what we  
3 saw.

4           This time we saw a rendering, a visualization  
5 that the architect made, and it is different, but again,  
6 it's not the story poles. It's you can't see it from there.  
7 I am about 11' higher than the top roof, standing up.  
8 Sitting down, it's kind of level. A lot of the view will be  
9 cut. This is the elevation of my front deck.

10           COMMISSIONER HANSSEN: What I'm getting out of  
11 this is that it doesn't really matter how they redistribute  
12 the buildings to your view?

13           ANDY GHOFrani: I would say if they redistributed  
14 the back to the front, yes, it will. It will be less  
15 impactful obviously; it's kind of level. The same thing we  
16 have is another one or two stories instead of four stories.

17           COMMISSIONER HANSSEN: So, if the trade-up was to  
18 move some of the height forward, and people would see more  
19 from downtown, but it would make your situation better?

20           ANDY GHOFrani: Yes.

21           COMMISSIONER HANSSEN: Okay, that's very good to  
22 know. Thank you.

23           CHAIR RASPE: Thank you. Any other questions,  
24 Commissioners? No. Thank you for your comments. Next  
25

1 speaker, Grant Sedgewick. Mr. Sedgewick, if you'll approach  
2 the podium, state your name for the record, and you'll have  
3 three minutes.

4 GRANT SEDGWICK: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and  
5 Members of the Commission. Grant Sedgewick; I'm a resident  
6 of Los Gatos.

7 I'm a real estate developer with about 50 years'  
8 experience, so I'm also a senior. I've lived in Los Gatos  
9 for 29 years and I did spend seven years as a consultant to  
10 one of the leading developers and operators of continuing  
11 care retirement communities in the whole country, actually  
12 the whole world, and so I have a couple of factual things  
13 to share with you, because I am completely objective; I'm  
14 not involved in this project in any way.

15  
16 First, about the scale. This question about the  
17 size of the units and whether they're too luxurious or  
18 extravagantly large, you've heard evidence from the  
19 developer's architect that that is about typical now, and I  
20 want to confirm that that's exactly right. Fourteen-hundred  
21 square foot is about right in California; I don't know much  
22 about the industry outside California.

23  
24 It's interesting that when this project was  
25 originally designed, I don't have the exact number, but I  
believe the independent living units were about 800 square

1 feet, so what is being represented is something like 75%  
2 larger. In that same period of 50 years median size of a  
3 single-family home in California grew 83%, so it's  
4 lifestyle, as it was properly answered when that question  
5 occurred earlier.

6           To meet the market, and there is a huge demand in  
7 the market and it is growing, you have to offer a product  
8 that is desirable. This project at 187 units, if I've got  
9 it right; I'm surprised that it is fiscally feasible,  
10 because my experience over seven years as a consultant to  
11 someone else in the industry was that 250 or 275  
12 independent living units was absolutely the minimum to be  
13 fiscally feasible, to be financially feasible. Perhaps  
14 because it is a nonprofit sponsor, perhaps because they've  
15 owned the land a long time, they can somehow make this work  
16 with so few units, but some of these communities are 500  
17 units in size. I'm not saying that that's what this should  
18 be, I'm just saying that if you're hearing that there are  
19 challenges to the financial feasibility, they are  
20 absolutely accurate; I'm sure they are.

22           Seniors should have the opportunities to grow old  
23 in the town they love, and you've heard that from a couple  
24 of other speakers and it's important, but there are  
25 compromises that you're going to have to weigh between

1 visibility from Main Street and visibility from the  
2 immediate neighbors, but they can't make this project any  
3 smaller. The fact that it has got no surface parking, it's  
4 doubled the amount of parking per unit and still conserves  
5 75% open space is terrific.

6 CHAIR RASPE: Thank you for those comments.  
7 Commissioners, any questions? Commissioner Barnett.

8 COMMISSIONER BARNETT: Thank you. Based on your  
9 long experience, do you have an opinion regarding the  
10 general plate height of units in this type of a community?  
11

12 GRANT SEDGWICK: Nine-and-a-half feet finished  
13 ceiling would be a minimum to do a proper... I think that's  
14 the architect's answer: 9.5' to 10' will be the goal, but  
15 he hadn't designed the final details. By the way, this is a  
16 great architecture firm.

17 And by the way, if I may add into that answer,  
18 the fact that this building may be partially visible from  
19 other parts of the Town isn't terrible and it's not a sin.  
20 If we have to have six stories, this is a great place to  
21 have it as long as it's great architecture, and I know  
22 you'll insist on that. But this is a site where if there  
23 was ever a site...

24 I brought before this Commission—probably none of  
25 you remember—seventeen years ago a project much bigger than

1 this on the site of the Los Gatos Lodge, and believe me, we  
2 fought about the height and my client had to walk away,  
3 because they couldn't accommodate, even on that site, the  
4 kind of project that the market demands, the economics of  
5 kinds of (inaudible).

6 COMMISSIONER BARNETT: Thank you very much for  
7 your answer; that's helpful.

8 CHAIR RASPE: Thank you so much. Any other  
9 questions, Commissioners? No. Thank you very much. That is  
10 the sum total of yellow cards I have, but before going to  
11 Zoom, is there anybody in chambers who wishes to speak in  
12 public? Seeing none, on Zoom, Mr. Paulson, I know we have  
13 at least one caller.

14 DIRECTOR PAULSON: Yes, thank you. Matthew, you  
15 can unmute yourself. If you will state your name for the  
16 record, and you'll have three minutes.

17 MATTHEW SOUTHERN: My name is Matthew Southern;  
18 I'm a 35-year resident of 123 Wood Road, and I'm here to  
19 express my concerns with the development at 110 Wood Road  
20 due to the potential habitat destruction and the impact it  
21 may have on the very animals our town is named after.

22 I'm not sure if you know much about the history  
23 of Los Gatos' name, but in 1839, ten years before  
24 California got its statehood, Los Gatos was named "La  
25

1 Rinconada de Los Gatos," "The Corner of the Cats", by  
2 brothers Jose Hernandez and Sebastian Peralta.

3           While today Los Gatos retains its name, its  
4 namesake, the wildcats that surround us in the Santa Cruz  
5 Mountains, are considered at risk through threats from  
6 habitat loss and urban development.

7           While I certainly support the Meadows and  
8 everything they do—I was a volunteer there during high  
9 school—I believe that the tripling of the floor plan of the  
10 current structure would significantly infringe upon the  
11 habitat of these majestic wildcats that our town borrows  
12 its name from. Considering the potential habitat loss to  
13 our Town's earliest residents—the wildcats, not me, a 35-  
14 year resident—the proposed increase in the size of the  
15 structure located in a mountain lion habitat—please see the  
16 image that I have included below—in addition to Los Gatos'  
17 heritage, I implore the Los Gatos Planning Commission to  
18 limit the size of this development.

19           I believe that considering the nature of our  
20 town, six stories in the foothills of the Santa Cruz  
21 Mountains will significantly infringe upon the environment  
22 of, again, the namesake of our town, these majestic  
23 wildcats.  
24  
25



1           Outside of that on the fire front, I do want to  
2 address that. While my main focus tonight is the mountain  
3 lions of the Santa Cruz Mountains, on the fire front I do  
4 believe something hasn't been addressed tonight.

5           While there are decent mitigation efforts on the  
6 trees and whatnot, the reason that Clair Southern and my  
7 house burned down when we were children was because 200  
8 residents of the Meadows had to be evacuated from a fast-  
9 moving brush fire that started at The Cats restaurant. My  
10 worry is that increasing that floor plan by triple, might  
11 be five units, might be another seven units of people that  
12 are in the last, later stages of their life, more  
13 supportive, but that means that the Los Gatos Fire  
14 Department is working on evacuating people and not actually  
15 working on a fire like when that fire swept through in  
16 1997.

18           Outside of that I do want to resurface the  
19 problem about fires, because that is a significant issue,  
20 not just for us. I realize that the Meadows might seem like  
21 a firebreak, but 200 residents acting as a firebreak,  
22 especially when they are slow-moving, is not ideal.

23           CHAIR RASPE: Mr. Southern, your time as elapsed.  
24 Thank you for your comments, but before we disconnect,  
25 Commissioners, any questions for the speaker? Seeing none,

1 thank you. Good evening and thank you for your comments.

2 Mr. Paulson, any other callers on Zoom?

3 DIRECTOR PAULSON: Thank you, Chair. I don't see  
4 any other hands on Zoom.

5 CHAIR RASPE: Having no more public comments, I  
6 will invite the Applicant then to reapproach the podium.  
7 You'll have three minutes to make any closing comments, and  
8 I would encourage you then to respond to any questions or  
9 open issues that you think have been flagged by either this  
10 commission or the public.  
11

12 SEAN KELLEY: Good evening, my name is Sean  
13 Kelly; I'm the CEO of Front Porch.

14 The first thing I want to do is thank you all. As  
15 Commissioners, this takes a little bit of time tonight and  
16 a lot of time over many years.

17 And I want to thank the Staff. The earnestness  
18 and completeness have been the kind of engagement that we  
19 hope for in the work that we do, and certainly in the work  
20 that leads towards development.

21 I also want to thank the people in the community,  
22 because it is not our intention to build a community that  
23 is not part of a bigger thing. We invite people to come to  
24 Front Porch, come to Los Gatos, to be a part of something  
25 larger, larger than themselves, a place that they can join

1 and have an impact on. And you don't get to have a  
2 community unless you take the time to build it, and we've  
3 taken a lot of time, and I'm grateful for it.

4 I would submit, listening in, that the project  
5 that we have now is a whole bunch better, not just better  
6 than what it was in 1967, but better than what it was when  
7 we brought it to you in the first place, and that does not  
8 happen without active listening and without a commitment to  
9 trying to make the world a little bit better for people  
10 like all of us that are getting older every day, if we're  
11 lucky.  
12

13 It is often said our best work happens when we're  
14 doing development, when we are building community before  
15 the shovels hit the ground, and I feel strongly that as  
16 painful as it can be to recognize that not every single  
17 need can be met, or every single accommodation or opinion  
18 can reach agreement with what it is that we ultimately hope  
19 to do, discussion doesn't end.

20 So, as much as I enjoy the commitment to building  
21 community, which I feel we are doing and won't stop, I also  
22 recognize that there is a fencing encircling an old set of  
23 buildings up on the hill that is pretty conspicuous, and it  
24 feels like it gets more conspicuous as each day goes by as  
25 we start to become more available in the community itself.

1 People ask us, "What's going on? When are you moving? When  
2 can I come? What's next? How long will it be?"

3           It is my sincere hope that after tonight we can  
4 move ahead with your support, and in the spirit what got us  
5 to this spot in the first place, which is to continue to  
6 listen and to continue to dialogue until we can put a  
7 shovel in the ground, so that our answer to that question  
8 "When?" can be soon.

9           So, I'm grateful and hopeful and here for  
10 questions and comments; I promised my colleagues to stay  
11 away from the details, but available, nonetheless. Thank  
12 you.

13  
14           CHAIR RASPE: Thank you, sir. Before you sit  
15 down, Commissioners, any questions? Commissioner Burnett.

16           COMMISSIONER BURNETT: Yes, and thank you, again.  
17 I wanted to ask about the parking. I notice you're going to  
18 have 120 fulltime employees. Is that correct? Yes. So,  
19 you're saying you're providing 214 parking places. Does  
20 that take into consideration your fulltime employees, or  
21 how does that work in the mix? Thank you.

22           DAVE HOVLAN: We carefully looked, because we  
23 know that the staff are largely going to be parking onsite,  
24 and that has been an issue with the neighborhood, parking  
25 on Wood Road and on Fairwell, so that has been looked at,

1 and also a projection of how many cars people that are  
2 going to live there will bring, and so that is why we have  
3 the number that we have provided, which is in excess of  
4 what is actually required by the zoning.

5 COMMISSIONER BURNETT: Okay, thank you.

6 CHAIR RASPE: Thank you. Commissioner Hanssen.

7 COMMISSIONER HANSSEN: I have a question for you  
8 about the people that live on Wood Road. If there were the  
9 ability to reconfigure where the height was so that it  
10 would have the least impact on the people that live on Wood  
11 Road, is there one where it would be almost no impact, or  
12 could you make it better by trading it off for the more  
13 height from downtown?  
14

15 DAVE HOVLAN: Could we go to Slide #9 if it's  
16 possible, because I did want to make sure that we elected  
17 not to increase the height of F and G, and because of the  
18 input from the Wood Road residents we did not increase, so  
19 that's part of the original proposal. Next slide.

20 Here you can see the arrangement; you've probably  
21 seen it in all the documents. F and G are the most in the  
22 visual corridor, as you can see Wood Road climbing up on  
23 the drawing north, and where we have tucked the mass with E  
24 and A, at the back of those, is below our part of the site,  
25 which is where the oak forest is. So, we have tried to

1 shift it away from the Wood Road residents, and as I said,  
2 we're below the elevation of Wood Road at that point with F  
3 and G, and even when we get higher with Wood Road, it's  
4 above our highest building in A.

5 COMMISSIONER HANSSEN: So, what you're saying is  
6 that when the actual buildings are built that it won't  
7 obstruct their view?

8 DAVE HOVLAN: Well, as I said earlier, view has  
9 many different perspectives. Is it long view? Because there  
10 was a comment earlier about raising the front buildings.  
11 Well, if we raise the front buildings then that takes the  
12 view corridor down looking down into the Town. I think we  
13 tried to make the best compromise by moving it where it's  
14 sort of nestled where the hillside already exists and is  
15 already obstructing view.

16 COMMISSIONER HANSSEN: Let me ask a different  
17 way. For those people that live on Wood Road—and I hear  
18 what you're saying that there are different aspects even  
19 from their view—since you reconfigured things between the  
20 last time and this time, what do you feel is the least  
21 impact to those people? Because the other aspect was people  
22 that are going through downtown and they're looking up and  
23 they're seeing buildings, but if you look up from any one  
24 of our view corridors—we have a View Ordinance for the  
25

1 hillsides and you can go on their viewing platforms—if you  
2 get on Los Gatos Boulevard you can see all kinds of houses  
3 in the hills and we ask that they blend in as much as  
4 possible, and you guys are doing that.

5 My question is I don't consider that as big of an  
6 issue for people looking up, but for the people that are  
7 already above you on Wood Road looking down, what is the  
8 best thing for them to have the least impact?

9  
10 DAVE HOVLAN: For those residents it is possible  
11 shifting some of the mass back to Buildings B and C, and I  
12 think all our visualizations—and we do have our  
13 visualization guide available—is that we're below them.  
14 We're not a wall in front of their homes; our highest  
15 building is below their first floor.

16 I know there was some misunderstanding earlier  
17 about the buildings stepping up the hill the way they do  
18 now, but we're building off a plinth, and the three and six  
19 stories goes from that same base elevation.

20 COMMISSIONER HANSSEN: So, you're saying that the  
21 top of a 97' building, and they're going to be up here?

22 DAVE HOVLAN: They're above us. But to the point  
23 of view, what we were hoping for was to make sure that  
24 nobody's long view was obstructed, to the mountains, to the  
25 skyline, but if somebody wanted to see down to Santa Cruz

1 Avenue and downtown, between the hillside and the trees I  
2 think it's already obstructed.

3 CHAIR RASPE: Commissioner Hanssen, does that  
4 answer your question? Vice Chair Thomas.

5 VICE CHAIR THOMAS: Would your view consultant or  
6 someone be able to show us some of these visuals?

7 DAVE HOVLAN: Yes.

8 VICE CHAIR THOMAS: Would he be able to provide  
9 some of that? Or, I don't know, I guess maybe not. I don't  
10 think so. He can't share his screen.

11 CHAIR RASPE: But would an oral report from the  
12 visual consultant be of assistance at least to hear from  
13 him?  
14

15 VICE CHAIR THOMAS: Okay. I trust you, but maybe  
16 it would be helpful to hear the visual consultant describe  
17 the...

18 DAVE HOVLAN: The process that we went through.

19 VICE CHAIR THOMAS: Yes, and like from the homes  
20 above on Wood Road. Thank you.

21 DIRECTOR PAULSON: So, Jonathan, you can unmute  
22 yourself.

23 JONATHAN ARNOLD: Hi, greetings everyone.  
24 Jonathan Arnold from Arnold Imaging. I'll see if I can  
25 share my screen. Am I allowed to do that?



1 CHAIR RASPE: I think we determined that  
2 technology does not exist on our end, so if you could do  
3 your best to give us maybe a one-minute kind of  
4 presentation or thoughts?

5 JONATHAN ARNOLD: Sure.

6 CHAIR RASPE: Hopefully you've been listening in.

7 JONATHAN ARNOLD: Yes, yes.

8 CHAIR RASPE: And then we may have a couple of  
9 follow-up questions, so go ahead and proceed.  
10

11 JONATHAN ARNOLD: Great. So, I think the question  
12 of datum is important. The plinth, if you will, where all  
13 these buildings, whether they are 3 stories or 6 stories,  
14 starts at 505'. The height of Wood Road, or let's say one  
15 of the neighbor's properties, is at 606'; that is their  
16 ground floor, or their land in front of their property, so  
17 that's approximately 100' above where the buildings start.  
18 The top of the buildings in the proposed project are 585'.  
19 If you are standing on the second floor of being at Wood  
20 Road, your eye height is at 622', which is 37' higher than  
21 the tallest building being proposed.

22 One way to think about this is if you're at a  
23 concert, and it's a well-designed amphitheater, you can see  
24 the stage and you can see the backdrop, and you can see  
25 everything that is out in front of you. If you look

1 directly down you may see the back of someone's head. Not  
2 unlike people that may be up above, people on Wood Road  
3 would look down and see the back of a two-story building;  
4 in this case one is exposed above the fire lane and is  
5 approximately two stories.

6           In my opinion, what the architect has done is  
7 quite brilliant. It's sculpted the building into the hill,  
8 kind of like in a theater how you keep the seats low in the  
9 front so that the view is opened up as much as possible. My  
10 assessment is that if H and B and C are raised, I think for  
11 everyone on Wood Road and up above the view would either be  
12 the same because of the way the geometry works, that you'd  
13 have the same amount clipped, or even worse, because the  
14 height would be extended out farther and more into peoples'  
15 view corridor.

17           That's about a minute, and I'd be open to answer  
18 any questions you might have.

19           CHAIR RASPE: Thank you for that. Commissioners,  
20 questions for the consultant? Vice Chair Thomas.

21           VICE CHAIR THOMAS: I do have a follow-up. Thank  
22 you for that description. I realize your job is  
23 visualizations, and now we're asking you to talk it  
24 through, so I really appreciate that.  
25

1           You had mentioned some of the height stuff. Do  
2 you know the current building heights? Can you just compare  
3 that at all for us visually?

4           JONATHAN ARNOLD: I don't have the current  
5 building heights.

6           VICE CHAIR THOMAS: Okay, that's fine.

7           JONATHAN ARNOLD: My assignment, I apologize.

8           VICE CHAIR THOMAS: That's okay. Okay, thank you.

9           CHAIR RASPE: (Inaudible).  
10

11           VICE CHAIR THOMAS: Yes. I mean, I know, I just  
12 was hoping that he would be able to describe it with the  
13 new floor.

14           CHAIR RASPE: Can you tell us what slide you  
15 were... Slide #25, Sean.

16           DAVE HOVLAN: Is that still working?

17           VICE CHAIR THOMAS: Yes.

18           DAVE HOVLAN: We are 35.5' higher than the  
19 building that sits under the footprint of A, and as I said  
20 earlier, one thing that's different about this development  
21 is we're working off similar datum. This building that's  
22 only two stories is stepped up and is already higher.

23           VICE CHAIR THOMAS: Yes. So, it will be 35.5'  
24 higher than that?  
25

1           DAVE HOVLAN: The existing building that's there.  
2 Is that the answer you were looking for?

3           VICE CHAIR THOMAS: Yes, thank you.

4           DAVE HOVLAN: And then it's 23, 20.

5           VICE CHAIR THOMAS: Okay, thank you.

6           CHAIR RASPE: Thank you. Any other questions for  
7 either the architect or the visual consultant? None. In  
8 sum, then, I think we'll close now the public portion of  
9 this matter, and now I invite discussion from my  
10 Commissioners. Questions, comments, thoughts, and/or a  
11 motion.  
12

13           Before we begin, I'll just confirm with Staff,  
14 what we're looking for tonight, I believe, is not an  
15 approval but recommendation to Town Council, and then  
16 recommendation with respect to both the PD and the EIR, is  
17 that correct?

18           SEAN MULLIN: Thank you for that question. That  
19 is correct, and if you look on page 9 of 10 of your Staff  
20 Report that is summarized in the steps that need to be made  
21 to move it forward with a recommendation.

22           CHAIR RASPE: Thank you, and just one follow-up.  
23 I think from my research from our last discussion the  
24 Commission agreed we should treat these two in tandem, that  
25 is, it wouldn't be prudent necessarily to approve one, or

1 recommend approval of one without the other, is that  
2 correct? They should work together.

3 SEAN MULLIN: That reflects the last  
4 recommendation that you made to Council. You recommended  
5 denial of the PD and noted that it wasn't appropriate to  
6 take any affirmative action on the final EIR since it was  
7 based on a project that you couldn't support at the time.

8 CHAIR RASPE: Very good. Thank you. All right,  
9 Commissioners, with that background in mind, I'm open to  
10 your comments. Vice Chair Thomas.

11 VICE CHAIR THOMAS: Before we move into some of  
12 our discussion, can Staff just summarize why story poles  
13 weren't put up this time, please? Thank you, Mr. Mullin.

14 SEAN MULLIN: Yes, thank you for that question. I  
15 pulled the Staff Report from the Applicant's June exception  
16 request from the Council which provides a good summary and  
17 I can just enter it into the record.

18 The existing Story Pole Policy was recently  
19 updated on and adopted by the Council on April 16<sup>th</sup> of this  
20 year. The updated policy requires installation of story  
21 poles and netting for new, nonresidential primary  
22 structures; however, the policy provides an exemption for  
23 buildings that are over 55' tall, requiring these projects  
24  
25

1 to provide alternate or video renderings prepared by the  
2 Town's consultant.

3           The current project, it was (inaudible) of these  
4 types of projects would qualify for this exemption with  
5 buildings ranging at the time well above 55'. The exception  
6 request involved with this particular project was because  
7 they were allowed to do the visual renderings by right  
8 under the policy. The exception request was to allow them  
9 to have the video renderings developed by their consultant,  
10 which Council ultimately approved. The justification for  
11 that was that they had already been prepared as part of  
12 their outreach to the community.  
13

14           VICE CHAIR THOMAS: Okay, thank you for that  
15 summary.

16           CHAIR RASPE: Thank you. That's a good question,  
17 and actually I think I know where you're headed. This is a  
18 project which I think would benefit greatly from the use of  
19 story poles. Not that we didn't (inaudible) robust public  
20 comment, but even greater last time, and I think in large  
21 measure it was the result of the story poles. So, I think  
22 on a going forward basis we'll have to evaluate how the new  
23 policy works. That being said, Commissioner Hanssen.  
24

25           COMMISSIONER HANSSEN: I just wanted to make a  
couple of comments. I do appreciate the value that this

1 project will bring to the Town. I mean, clearly even though  
2 we've had a couple of other senior developments—one is  
3 getting ready to open fairly soon, I believe, on Blossom  
4 Hill—when we started this process years ago there was a  
5 two- or three-year waiting list at the Terraces, so this is  
6 definitely a thing that our community needs.

7           If you look at this from the big picture  
8 perspective, there was already a senior living community  
9 there, so this is going to take it to the next level and it  
10 will be a huge improvement over what was there before.

11           As we've gone through this process there were  
12 some things that really needed to change, and I do feel  
13 like the Applicant has made some of those changes. Probably  
14 the one thing that is still outstanding is just that there  
15 really is no way to architect this thing due to fire safety  
16 and some other considerations, and the financial  
17 considerations as well, so that it's going to be smaller  
18 and less tall buildings.

19           Then the question of the view comes in, and if  
20 I'm thinking about it from the overall Town's benefit, I  
21 would probably prefer that we actually raise the heights so  
22 that there is more impact when you're looking from  
23 downtown, because we already have so many things that  
24 you're looking at from downtown, seeing buildings anyway,  
25

1 than to hurt those people on Wood Road that have been there  
2 for 30+ years or longer.

3 I think I heard that what's on the table right  
4 now is the best thing for view of the available  
5 alternatives. So, that being said, I feel that overall, it  
6 seems like a pretty good project and well designed.

7 CHAIR RASPE: Thank you for those comments.  
8 Commissioners? Yes, Commissioner Barnett.

9 COMMISSIONER BARNETT: Question for Staff. There  
10 were concerns mentioned about the traffic control during  
11 construction, and the environmental effect on animals, and  
12 if my memory is correct, those are addressed in the EIR, is  
13 that correct?  
14

15 SEAN MULLIN: Thank you for that question. The  
16 EIR looked at traffic, looked at the emissions and traffic  
17 impacts as a result of construction, includes some  
18 mitigation measures for that, and additionally toward  
19 sensitive species in the area. The Town also includes  
20 requirements potentially for traffic control through study  
21 of the Architecture and Site Application if the project  
22 takes the next step. We do have Staff from the Parks and  
23 Public Works Department that may be able to add more detail  
24 if you wish.  
25



1 COMMISSIONER BARNETT: That's very helpful, thank  
2 you.

3 CHAIR RASPE: Thank you. Commissioners? Vice  
4 Chair Thomas.

5 VICE CHAIR THOMAS: Just going off those last  
6 questions, if Staff could just answer a few generic  
7 questions about when an Architecture and Site Application  
8 comes through—if it does, but typically when they do—things  
9 like these traffic mitigation measures, that residents  
10 living on Wood Road are typically included in the Condition  
11 of Approval?  
12

13 SEAN MULLIN: Thank you. Any traffic mitigation  
14 specifically to emissions are going to be included in the  
15 MMRP that is attached to the EIR. So, if this PD moves  
16 forward and the EIR is adopted, then those mitigation  
17 measures will become, if you will, performance standards or  
18 Conditions of Approval that will carry through the  
19 Architecture and Site Application and forward.

20 If there are specific non-environmental  
21 construction traffic mitigation needs that are determined  
22 during the Architecture and Site review that are not  
23 included as performance measures in any way, then those  
24 could be added and studied during the Architecture and Site  
25 Application.

1 VICE CHAIR THOMAS: So, for example, getting in  
2 and off Santa Cruz Avenue during high traffic times, things  
3 like that, that would be typically looked at and included  
4 at that point?

5 SEAN MULLIN: It certainly could have. There are  
6 a number of conditions.

7 VICE CHAIR THOMAS: Yes.

8 SEAN MULLIN: It's been a bit since I've read  
9 them. If it's not included that's something that can be  
10 discussed and included if deemed necessary.

11 VICE CHAIR THOMAS: Okay. Thank you.

12 CHAIR RASPE: Thank you. Commissioner, any other  
13 questions or comments? Commissioner Barnett.

14 COMMISSIONER BARNETT: I have a number of  
15 observations, if you will.

16 Although it's difficult to accept a large project  
17 like this that will have visual impacts, both from downtown  
18 and to certain neighbors, I think the application  
19 substantially meets prior recommendations of the Conceptual  
20 Development Advisory Committee, the Planning Commission,  
21 and the Town Council.

22 I appreciate the efforts to reduce the visual  
23 impact by moving the building mass back toward the  
24 hillside, and reduction of grading related to parking. I  
25

1 think the mix of the unit types and sizes is very much  
2 improved. I think the proposal would contribute  
3 significantly to the Town's senior housing needs and  
4 provide opportunities for full and enjoyable lives of  
5 seniors. It (inaudible) provides for the protection of  
6 wildlife and tribal resources as well as other requirements  
7 of the EIR. The preservation of the open space is  
8 appreciated. Development would add significantly to the  
9 local economy, and material choices substantially improved  
10 the appearance of the property from downtown.  
11

12 I also note that the proposed 166 conditions  
13 address a wide gamut of potential concerns for the Town and  
14 its citizen, so I would support the project.

15 CHAIR RASPE: Thank you for those comments.  
16 Commissioners Burnett.

17 COMMISSIONER BURNETT: Thank you. I just want a  
18 clarification on a previous item. We could not take views  
19 into consideration for the project, and yet we are talking  
20 about taking views in consideration on this project. Is  
21 there a difference? I ask the Chairman.

22 CHAIR RASPE: I remain confused. Oh, yes. So, my  
23 understanding—and I'll ask Town Counsel to correct me if  
24 I'm wrong—the notion of light or view easements essentially  
25 means that a private property owner doesn't have a right to

1 a specific view or a specific amount of sunshine on their  
2 property. That is, some towns codify that, other towns do  
3 not; Los Gatos does not. This is different in that what  
4 we're talking about is a view from a public area as opposed  
5 to a private area for the most part.

6           Granted, on Wood Road we are speaking about their  
7 private views, and so they don't have a vested right in  
8 those views, but we can take into consideration views as a  
9 general matter. Correct, Town Counsel?

10           ATTORNEY WHELAN: Yes, and I think there might be  
11 another nuance to, I think, the fact that this is in the  
12 Hillside Specific Plan. I think there is discussion in the  
13 Specific Plan of preserving views.

14           CHAIR RASPE: Very good. Thank you for that  
15 comment.

16           COMMISSIONER BURNETT: Thank you for that  
17 clarification.

18           CHAIR RASPE: I have a couple of comments as  
19 well.

20           First of all, I want to thank the Applicant.  
21 They've worked very diligently. I think they've listened to  
22 Town Council, the Planning Commission, certainly the  
23 neighbors, and made some good changes. I think the project  
24  
25

1 is much improves since we first saw it some time ago; it  
2 even predates me. I think they have made process.

3 I think the unit size mix has been much improved,  
4 both removing the penthouses and reducing the overall size.  
5 In a perfect world I think we would enjoy smaller units,  
6 which would be more affordable, but in our prior  
7 discussions we learned that really doesn't work  
8 financially. The grading plan works. The parking I think is  
9 improved, and as we heard tonight, the fire plan is much  
10 improved and would help that community. I think it goes  
11 without saying that this town, like most towns in  
12 California, can use much improved senior housing stock.

14 All that being said, I think there are a couple  
15 of areas I would have loved to have done better, or maybe  
16 there is still a little bit of work to do.

17 For instance, the height; I understand that's the  
18 issue, and I think I agree with Commissioner Hanssen in  
19 that I wouldn't want to sacrifice our friends on Wood Road  
20 and push the project into their views to save downtown view  
21 corridors, if there would be a way—and maybe what it means  
22 is going back slightly to the prior iteration—to protect  
23 our Wood Road neighbors and their corridors at least a  
24 little bit while maintaining the financial viability of the  
25 project.

1           The second would be making sure that construction  
2 is managed in an appropriate fashion for Wood Road and for  
3 all our neighbors.

4           With those two conditions I think I would support  
5 us recommending an approval to Town Council of the PD and  
6 the EIR. Commissioner Hanssen.

7           COMMISSIONER HANSSEN: I just had a question. You  
8 kind of got into it a little bit on the traffic management.  
9 What we're being asked to do is to recommend approval on  
10 the PD application as well as the EIR, and then there will  
11 later be an Architecture and Site coming?  
12

13           DIRECTOR PAULSON: Thank you for the question.  
14 Yes, that's correct, and in the current draft PD there are  
15 performance standards for construction vehicle parking,  
16 traffic control plan, Caltrans approval of traffic control  
17 plans, construction traffic control, advanced notification,  
18 so all that stuff is currently covered in the draft  
19 performance standards for the ordinance.

20           COMMISSIONER HANSSEN: So, there wouldn't be an  
21 additional consideration at that point. I talked about it a  
22 little bit, but when I looked at the volume of grading that  
23 would be involved in the 14,000 trips, it's a lot. I saw it  
24 happen with one house in my neighborhood, and literally for  
25 three weeks, all day long for nine hours, truck, truck,

1 truck. This will be very difficult during that process, but  
2 there are performance standards that will help them that  
3 are currently in the PD?

4           DIRECTOR PAULSON: That's correct, and as Mr.  
5 Mullin mentioned, there are also probably mitigation  
6 measures that also become performance standards specific to  
7 the construction impacts, which are the short-term impacts  
8 of construction from an environmental perspective.

9           CHAIR RASPE: Thank you. Vice Chair Thomas.

10           VICE CHAIR THOMAS: Thank you for bringing that  
11 up, Commissioner Hanssen. Last time we asked a lot of  
12 questions about that regarding the Environmental Impact  
13 Report, and I know that hasn't changed, but I just want to  
14 reiterate that the Commission was very concerned about  
15 those expectations and that part of it, so thank you.

16           I would like to echo my fellow commissioners'  
17 comments, especially with regard to some of the firesafe  
18 materials that will be used in this development, because I  
19 think that's something that's just really important to a  
20 lot of people in town, and very admirable.

21           With that, shall I make a motion?

22           CHAIR RASPE: Yes. Last time, if memory serves,  
23 we made a motion with specific recommendations to Council  
24 vis-a-vis our thoughts on additional issues, so if the  
25

1 motion is going to be our approval I will ask that you just  
2 include, for instance, the reconfiguration to protect the  
3 Wood Road neighbors, and anything else, Commissioners?

4 VICE CHAIR THOMAS: I am happy to do that. Well,  
5 I'm happy to still go forward with the motion, but I don't  
6 know if we're all in agreement with how the reconfiguring  
7 should be, so I'll just explain from my perspective.

8 Listening to the visualization expert, and from  
9 my understanding of angles and views, moving that forward  
10 is still going to impact the residents of Wood Road, and  
11 it's actually going to be farther out in front of them and  
12 taller, so I'm not sure that moving that will actually  
13 satisfy as many people, and I believe that's kind of what  
14 Commissioner Hanssen was feeling too, but I'm happy to  
15 listen to what my fellow commissioners also have to think  
16 about that.

18 CHAIR RASPE: Commissioner Hanssen.

19 COMMISSIONER HANSSEN: What I heard from the view  
20 consultant was that the proposal that's on the table  
21 tonight is the best for the people on Wood Road.

22 CHAIR RASPE: Commissioners, is that your  
23 understanding as well?

24 COMMISSIONER BARNETT: It is my understanding,  
25 but I wanted to suggest a possible suggestion for the Town



1 Council, and that is to further consider with the project  
2 architect and developer the possibility of reducing the 17'  
3 ground level to first floor level to possibly help the Wood  
4 Road neighbors.

5 CHAIR RASPE: How about then maybe what we'll do  
6 is avoid specifics. We indicate an approval of the project  
7 with a mind towards any actions that can be taken to  
8 protect Wood Road. Is that a fair motion?

9 VICE CHAIR THOMAS: In general, overall height?

10 CHAIR RASPE: Overall height and placing of  
11 height? Is that acceptable?

12 VICE CHAIR THOMAS: Okay. I also would just add  
13 before I make that motion, last time we asked many  
14 questions about the plate height, and in a lot of our  
15 paperwork it seems like it's a lot, but then we were  
16 reminded that because this is a multi-story, multi-unit  
17 situation there is a lot of HVAC situation that has to go  
18 on in between the two plates, so that's what brings it down  
19 to the 9.5' actual ceiling height, which I appreciated that  
20 last time, and I know that we did not discuss that tonight  
21 as much, or much in depth for the public.

22 With that being said, I will move to recommend an  
23 approval the of Planned Development for demolition of a  
24 senior living community on property zoned R:PD at 110 Wood  
25

1 Road, APN 510-47-038, and all the other things included in  
2 that.

3 I can make the required findings included in  
4 Exhibit 4. I can also make the findings required by CEQA,  
5 including Exhibit 5, including certifying the Final  
6 Environmental Impact Report in Exhibit 2, and adopt the  
7 Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program also in Exhibit  
8 2, and I can also make the recommendation to adopt the  
9 Planned Development Ordinance in Exhibit 16, and approve  
10 the proposed project. Did I cover everything?  
11

12 CHAIR RASPE: And with the added notation of...

13 VICE CHAIR THOMAS: If possible, reducing overall  
14 height, specifically to meet everyone's needs.

15 CHAIR RASPE: Very good. Is there a second?  
16 Commissioner Hanssen.

17 COMMISSIONER HANSEN: I'll second, but do we  
18 need to specifically say we're also recommending  
19 certification of the Environmental Impact Report? You said  
20 all the other things.

21 VICE CHAIR THOMAS: Oh, yes. Including the EIR  
22 and the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program and the  
23 CEQA Checklist.

24 CHAIR RASPE: Motion so amended. Second?

25 COMMISSIONER HANSEN: I will second.

1 CHAIR RASPE: Thank you. Discussion? By a show of  
2 hands, Commissioners, all those in favor? The motion passes  
3 unanimately.

4 Mr. Mullin, since this is a recommendation, I  
5 assume there are no appeal rights.

6 SEAN MULLIN: That's correct.

7 CHAIR RASPE: Thank you very much. Thank you,  
8 all.

9 (END)

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