

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, February 18, 2022 4:13 PM
To: General Plan <generalplan@cityofsanmateo.org>
Cc: Diane Papan <dpapan@cityofsanmateo.org>
Subject: FW: Historic San Mateo Neighborhoods

Hello!

I sent this email yesterday but it appears I added an extra space to the email address and it bounced back.

I hope it is not too late for input from local citizens.

Councilmembers' statements that single family dwellings should no longer be allowed shows a strong bias and a close mindedness to other perspectives and opinions. We elected these council members and it appears that I may have erred in my vote if they won't consider any opinion other than their own. Hopefully this is not the case and they will consider input from local homeowners who want to preserve the historic neighborhoods in our community based on the reality of living in these neighborhoods.

I'm appalled at having heard others describe Baywood as "the rich people who live on the hill." We and our friends are public school kids who went to college, in my husband's case San Jose State, worked hard, and saved. When we were young we didn't travel, go to Starbucks, get manicures, or buy season tickets for any sports. We couldn't afford to fly out of state to attend a friend's wedding. We saved and bought a nice home which is now ridiculously expensive. We couldn't afford to buy it ourselves in today's market. That doesn't mean however that everyone should be build extra living units in our very small backyards where there is little or no parking and the schools are already crowded.

The City and County have approved and developers have built many large apartment complexes with housing for thousands. Most of these complexes are close to CalTrain and BART stations, which makes sense. Adequate parking and transportation are part of the original plans. This is not the case for additional living units built in backyards or driveways of existing residences.

These new units are SUPPOSED to help lower income residents stay in San Mateo, yet the REAL BENEFICIARIES ARE DEVELOPERS standing in the wings ready to pounce. In my letter I discuss some of the construction challenges that await.

The issue is not straightforward in implementation, value or who ultimately gains the maximum benefit.

Sandy and Robert Montevaldo

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 17, 2022 9:25 PM
To: generalplan@cityofsanmateo.org
Cc: dpapan@cityofsanmateo.org
Subject: Historic San Mateo Neighborhoods

Hello!

We are Robert and Sandy Montevaldo and have lived in San Mateo since 1984, first on Oregon Avenue in the Baywood Knolls neighborhood for ten years, and now on Nevada Avenue in the Baywood neighborhood for the past 28 years.

The house we live in was built in 1931, and our neighbors' homes in 1927, soon to be 100 years old. Along with the beauty and quality craftsmanship of our homes come some challenges, i.e. living in the 21st century in a home originally designed and built for a world with very few cars and with only small setbacks between homes. When we remodeled twelve years ago, because of the original narrow setbacks between ours and our neighbors homes, our contractor could not get even the smallest tractor into our backyard. Work was done with a jack hammer, shovel and wheelbarrow, not very efficient and definitely labor intensive. I'm sure our home is not the only one like this. Construction is challenging if the front of the house on the lot is not involved in the construction. Exactly how would these proposed additional living units even be built on these lots?

Our garage is also representative of our area. When viewed from the outside at first glance, it looks like a two-car garage, but upon closer inspection, one notices that it is narrower than a modern two-car garage. Indeed, having carefully measured our garage when we first moved in, we quickly realized that the same two, not very large cars that fit into our 1948 garage on Oregon Avenue, would never fit in our 1931 Nevada Avenue garage. Our only option is to park one car on the right side of the garage and park our second car on the left side of the driveway. We make this work by very carefully backing out of the garage, albeit with the car's sensors regularly warning us that we are getting too close to our second car in the driveway. During the pandemic, our daughter stayed with us for several months and she, like our neighbors' children, had to park on the street.

This might not seem like a problem, but when you consider that the house on the corner across the street was purchased just before the pandemic by 3 adult siblings as theirs and their spouses' permanent residence, it does create a problem. Between the six of them living there, they own SEVEN cars, three of which they park in their driveway on Alameda and on the street next to it, leaving the other four and sometimes five, to be parked in front of their house on Nevada. We invite friends to our house for dinner and they can't find a place to park. In addition to avoiding scraping our second car in the driveway as we back out, we now have to be very careful that we don't hit the neighbors' cars parked across the street because Nevada Avenue isn't very wide.

This doesn't even consider the issue of Baywood School parents parking right up to the edge of our driveway during any event at Baywood, day or night. This is actually what public parking should be used for, but it has practically disappeared and would be non-existent with the cars of residents from additional living units. As it is, one must always be cautious driving up and down Nevada Avenue at any hour of the day or night because with cars parked on both sides of the street, there is only room for one car to comfortably drive down the street and definitely not enough width for cars to travel in two directions. Drivers routinely stop and wait for the car coming towards them to pass before proceeding as otherwise they would either hit a parked car or the other driver.

Over the past 25+ years San Mateo homeowners have lived with City imposed daylight plane requirements to protect our neighbors sunlight and privacy, but it seems this no longer matters. So many homeowners were restricted from adding more square footage or another story because of City of

San Mateo building codes. Now it appears that protections and privacy are all too easily being ignored by elected officials. As mentioned previously, there is little setback between our house and our neighbors which is typical in Baywood. We already have black out curtains in one bedroom because of lights from the neighbor's kitchen and bedroom just a few feet away from our house. On the other side of our house we have sheer curtains to provide a bit of privacy from our other neighbor from their driveway and kitchen. Our yard already borders 4 other families, 2 on Nevada and, over the back fence, 2 on Virginia. Now our City Council is considering that we conceivably might have 8 families who could look over our fences.

To recap, issues that need to be seriously considered in Baywood and other historic neighborhoods are:

- Construction Issues in backyard locations where these units are proposed to be built.
- A serious lack of Parking and Garage Space.
- Additional Traffic and safety problems, not just on already busy streets.
- Violations of residents' Rights of Privacy.
- Lack of capacity at Schools which are already at maximum enrollment and have nowhere to expand their campuses.
- Negative effects on the desirability of living in the City of San Mateo.
- LAST BUT NOT LEAST, NEGATIVE AFFECTS ON THE SPECTRUM OF WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE AND MEANS TO LIVE IN THE CITY OF SAN MATEO.

A community thrives on diversity, not only a diversity of cultures and ethnicities, but visually of different architecture and structures large and small, a diversity of living styles including single family dwellings, condominiums, apartments, duplexes and quadraplexes. NO ONE WANTS A CITY OF ANY ONE THING, NOT MATTER WHAT IT IS. We need restaurants, offices and retail, just the same as we need different kinds of housing, not just dense housing.

To address ABAG's housing mandates, the Peninsula, including San Mateo, have built easily 50 new large apartment complexes from South San Francisco to Redwood City with many of these in San Mateo.

For more than 25 years, we have lived with the City created restrictions on construction and remodeling including: maximum square footage (counting garages too); daylight planes minimums; maximum heights of homes; and, many other restrictions. NOW the City is taking completely the OPPOSITE APPROACH.

It is unhealthy to have leaders in our City stating that single family dwellings are obsolete. It is closeminded, not openminded or creative. Other opinions in our community should not be ignored just because certain councilmembers are openly advocating a one-size fits all approach. IT IS THE OPPOSITE OF A BROAD SPECTRUM OF IDEAS AND EXPERIENCE, something that the City and County of San Mateo are rightfully proud of.

Robert and Sandy (Osgood) Montevaldo

