

**Request to the City Council of San Mateo
To do not lower our home land use zone density category.
606 S Delaware St, San Mateo, CA 94402**

April 18, 2022

Dear San Mateo Mayor Rick Bonilla, Deputy Mayor Diane Papan and City Council Members Joe Goethals, Amourence Lee and Eric Rodriguez.

We are writing to you in regards of the recent General Plan discussions that could greatly affect our homeowners rights.

We are opposed and concerned about the proposed down zoning to my block, it could face legal scrutiny and is contrary to our City's stated goals of zoning to meet our RHNA (Regional Housing Needs Allocation) numbers.

Our property is currently zoned R4 (high density multifamily housing) and the Land Use Alternatives for Zone 4 all propose down-zoning: the Alternative A is proposing to change it to a Medium Density and Alternative B and C want to lower it into a Low Density.

The property is located clearly in the Downtown District and inside the Half Mile Mass Transit Radius, right where many new tall building constructions is already happening, so we should be equally treated and our current zoning should not be lowered.

Our property shown in the map below with an arrow is located at 606 S Delaware St, between 5th and 7th Ave which is inside the Downtown city limits and referenced as Study Area 4 for the General Plan Update.

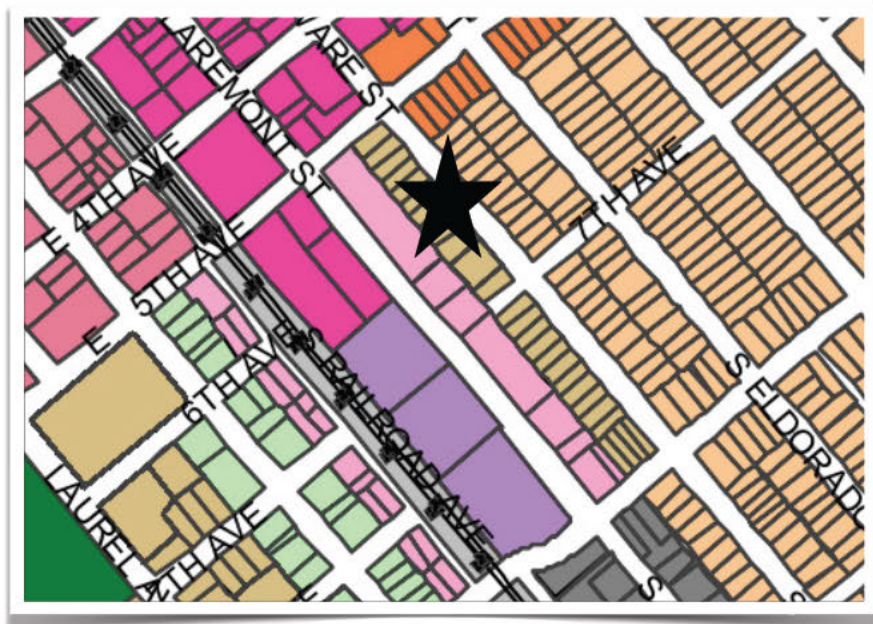
Study Area 4 - Downtown



We have been engaged and following with interest all the new plans for improvements for the future of our beloved city where we live and work and we even hosted one of the first General Plan meetings at our business, the Motion Arts Center dance studio located at 217 S Claremont St. (which was closed for over a year because of the pandemic)

When we bought our home in 2013 one very important factor for us to purchase this specific one was that it was designated as a R4 High Density Zoning. Our reasoning was that San Mateo will keep growing and eventually we could start building more square feet of living area since there is always an increasing need for more housing.

The image below (taken from a current San Mateo city land use map) shows with a star where our property is located and the brown color means that it is a High Density Multi-Family Zone.



After participating in person and later watching numerous City Council meetings we saw that the Council was firmly determined to tackle this lack of housing, a goal that it is also greatly encouraged by the California State Government.

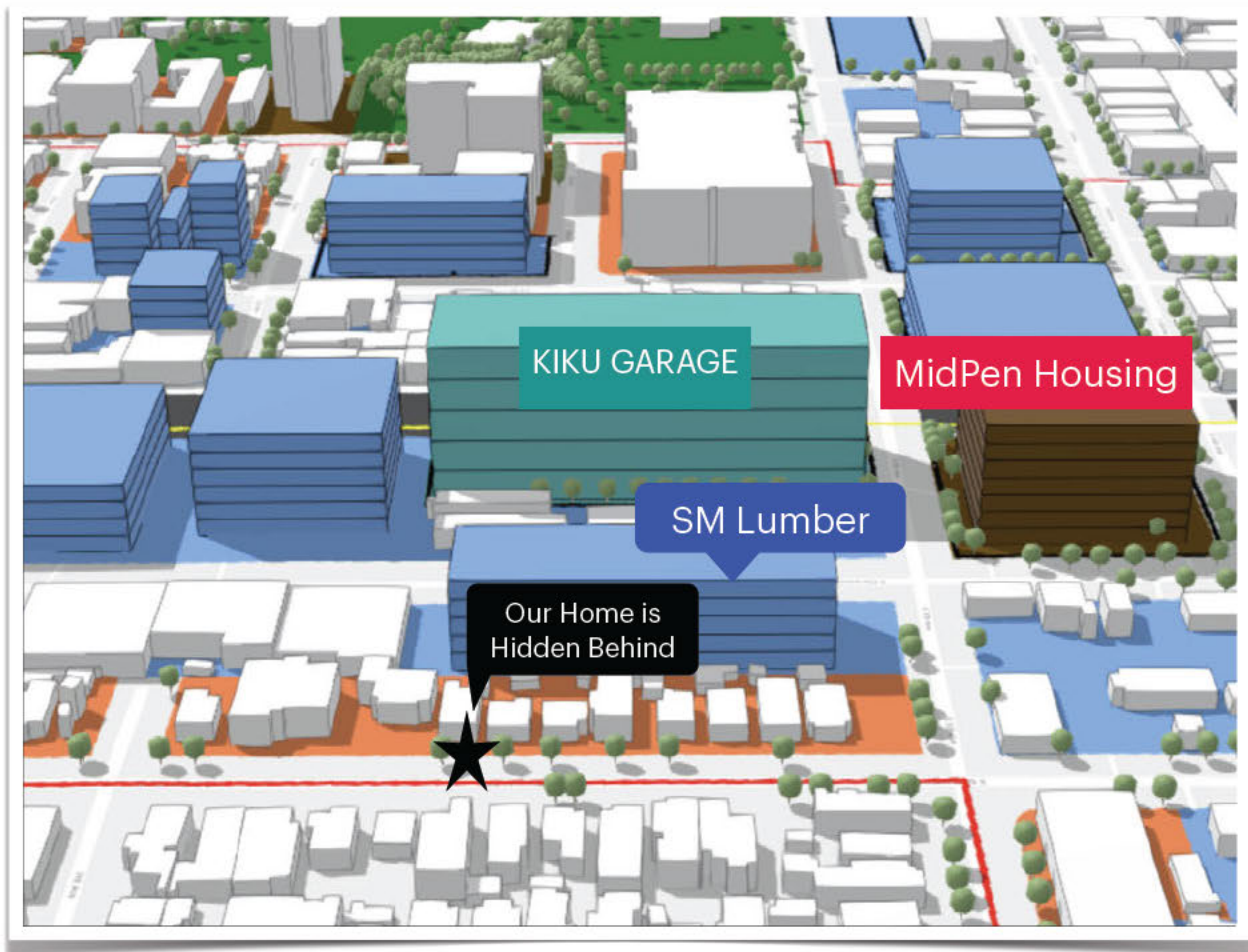
We witness how many new buildings have been approved just in the next two blocks of our home, like the one at 405 E 4th Ave, where Verkada has its headquarters and the recently approved Kiku Crossing MidPen Housing just one block from us.

We are very happy that new affordable housing is coming to the city, but unfortunately the height of the 7 floors of the residences and the 5 Floors of the Garage will greatly affect our privacy in our backyard, the amount of open view and even the hours of sunlight that we are used to enjoying everyday.

This view taken from the Online Virtual Tool that the city provides shows our block hidden behind the possible construction at the San Mateo Lumber (blue color in the following picture). In green color is the representation of the Kiku Crossing Garage while the MidPen Housing is shown in color brown.



Below is another view from a different angle of our block that shows the near future and how everything will look when construction is completed. Our property shouldn't be downzoned with so much construction right in-front of us!



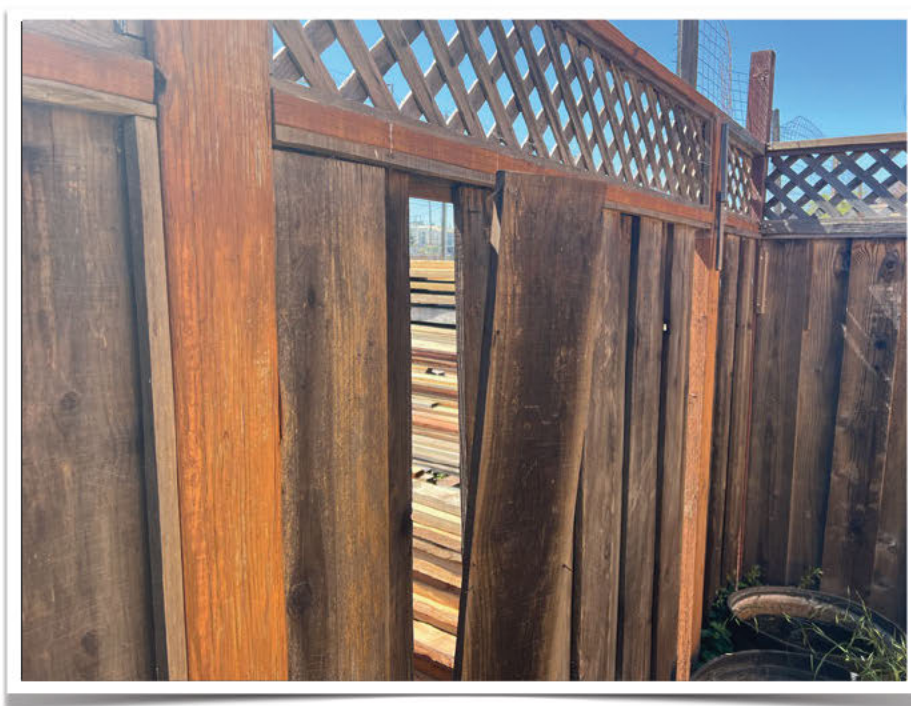
We understand that on top of that it will not be fair at all to us (and to the rest of the residents in our block) to suffer an unjustified zoning downgrading of our future building capabilities as it is shown at the moment in the alternatives A, B and C of Study Area 4, while every other property in our zone is being greatly improved in their building density zoning.

If any of these proposals are approved by the Council it will inflict a direct economic harm to the value of our main family asset and that of our S Delaware St. neighbors in the two blocks between 5th Ave and 9th Ave. The affected properties addresses by this possible change are: S Delaware St. 500, 504, 512, 514, 518, 522, 600, 604, 606, 610, 622, 626, 702, 706, 710, 714, 718, 720, 724, 800, 804, 810, 814 and 820).

Moreover, our neighbor right behind our backyard is the San Mateo Lumber, which is sitting in a big lot that could easily be converted in the future into another tall building that will completely diminish our privacy and quality of life.

As you can see it is very clear to visualize in the previous images that our homes could be massively shaded by present and future constructions and that at least the Council should protect our current zone density designation..

Below is a picture of the fence of our backyard recently broken by regular operations by the lumber yard that unequivocally shows that we are in the Downtown Business Area after all.





Please make justice and consider this request to ease our situation and just imagine for a moment how you would personally feel if this ever happened to your home and property. We believe this zoning downgrading is against the spirit of the General Plan, it is arguably a policy mistake that did not consider in depth the dynamics of this block and something that was never proposed at any meeting by any of the San Mateo neighbors.

We respectfully ask you to keep our block with the zoning that it currently has which is an R4 High Density Multi-Family one.

At this moment Alternative A is proposing to change it to a Medium Density and Alternative B and C want to lower it into a Low Density.

The San Mateo City website says that the city is committed to equity but we will not feel equally treated if our block is the only block in the San Mateo Downtown District that is lowered when everything else is upgraded and getting ready for more construction as required and mandated by law.

Sincerely yours,

Gustavo Hornos & Jesica Salomon

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