

From: Catherine Marreiro [REDACTED] >
Sent: Thursday, September 8, 2022 10:25 AM
To: General Plan <generalplan@cityofsanmateo.org>; Zachary Dahl <zdahl@cityofsanmateo.org>
Cc: adam.william.nugent@gmail.com; Amourence Lee <alee@cityofsanmateo.org>
Subject: Letter to the Planning Commission for Sept. 13 General Plan goals discussion (amended)

Dear members of the planning commission and planning staff,

My apologies for a second letter, we realized we had mistakenly listed a couple of people on Claremont who actually are on Delaware.

The Land Use Alternatives maps were a tremendous undertaking and we appreciate staff's efforts in creating them. With hundreds of tiny squares on these maps, there may be some missing elements and this is where we would like to take the opportunity to address a potential concern with the designation for the block at 545 First Ave., the current site of Hassett Hardware.

This site, at the corner of Delaware Street, is where the commercial uses of downtown transition to the residential area of North Central San Mateo. The immediate residential uses are mainly single-story houses with a few two-story houses. There is also a three-story condominium building on the block. The Hassett site, along with the Andrews Building immediately to the north, is currently zoned commercial, with a 50-foot cap.

The Land Use Alternatives map designates the section of this block as both mixed-use medium 4-7 stories next to residential low 1-3 stories on the same block. On paper, the transition may make sense since the highest use for residential is 3 levels and lowest use for mixed-use is 4 levels. In reality, however, the current conditions are different. The potential jump up to 7 stories, and possibly up to 9 with state density bonuses from SB 35, means there is a very real possibility that there could be a 9-story commercial building immediately next to a single-story residence. While that is a worst-case scenario, we worry establishing such zoning could make the possibility real as the new property owner for the Hassett site has a history of commercial development. If the adjoining Andrews building is purchased by this developer, the potential for this rises.

As part of the goals section of the General Plan discussion, we ask that consideration be provided to current uses in residential areas and that zoning reflect the need to transition heights into these areas. We also ask that zoning on the same block be compatible.

We enjoy having Hassett here and appreciate its convenience and ability to provide jobs for neighborhood youth, and would love for it to stay. We could envision a new development with the current store returning on the ground floor and up to 3 levels of housing under the current 50-foot cap. We also could see a 3-4 level condominium building with limited parking to address this area's need for "missing middle" housing that transitions from commercial to residential areas. We also understand that a 5-level housing development could be built under the current cap. We are absolutely fine with these scenarios to varying degrees. As is typically the case with new development with a significant shift in land use, we would hope that there would be some accommodations when possible when it comes to setbacks, stepbacks and, when possible, retention of daylight planes.

We understand one of the main goals of the General Plan was to provide areas in which new housing could be built to address this area's growing need. We recognize this site's potential for new housing

and welcome it as high as 50 feet, if done well and with some accommodations, and would prefer it to be slightly lower to transition better to the existing North Central neighborhood, which includes the city's oldest house directly across the street and a number of unique and interesting single-family homes in a traditionally low-income area of the city.

However, we would also like to be treated the same as other areas of the city and other blocks, which had accommodations for transitions to neighborhoods. Nowhere else in the city is there the potential for a current single-story residential use immediately next to a potential 9-story commercial building in any of the Land Use Alternatives map.

To summarize, we would like a goal established that any new zoning remain compatible within the same block so that heights stay within 2-3 floors of the current average after any density bonuses, that future development transition into established neighborhoods, and that the height for any future development on the commercial portion of this block be limited to allow for these two requests.

We are submitting this request as part of the goals section of the General Plan discussion but can also submit it during the Land Use Alternatives section when the draft General Plan is discussed next year. If there is another time for us to submit this request, or any other action we must take, please let us know.

Thanks again for the effort in creating this plan, receiving our concerns, and making the necessary modifications.

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Woodrow Andrews
501 First Ave. (Owner of The Andrews Building)

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Jessica Huang
30 S. Delaware St.

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Jon Mays and Dayna Alpine
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