

Sarah Mayer

Public comment - SBCAN

#6



From: Nancy <nancynpwork@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 7, 2024 8:36 AM
To: sbcob
Subject: SBCAN Public Comment 5/7
Attachments: SBCAN PCL- Affordable Housing on County-Owned Land.pdf

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Dear Supervisors,

Please see the attachment for Santa Barbara County Action Network (SBCAN)'s public comment letter on the County Rezone process after considering additional information brought forward at the May 3rd hearing.

Please also see this petition signed by 123 persons as of 8:30 AM on Tuesday, May 7 to urge the county to build affordable housing units and workforce housing units on underutilized plots of county-owned land.

https://www.change.org/support_affordable_and_workforce_housing_SBcounty

We thank you for your hard work and consideration,

Nancy Avoce, Assistant Director
Santa Barbara County Action Network (SBCAN)



April 24, 2024

Dear County Board of Supervisors,

On behalf of Santa Barbara County Action Network (SBCAN), we ask the county to consider plots of land owned by the county that are underutilized to be used to develop deed-restricted affordable housing units and workforce housing units.

SBCAN, for all our 22 years, has advocated for affordable housing throughout the county while attempting to preserve open space.

Hundreds of acres of county-owned land are currently vacant or underutilized. The easiest way to come up with affordable housing units which are severely lacking throughout the county is to take advantage of underutilized county-owned land so that we can maximize and prioritize affordability, provide workforce housing and decrease commute times and greenhouse gas emissions, and protect open spaces which county residents hold as sacred. We would like to emphasize that the county should prioritize using lots of county-owned land like empty parking lots rather than lots such as the Isla Vista Community Center and Isla Vista Clinic Buildings.

SBCAN understands that the County must consider ways to fund the construction of affordable housing units. We urge the County to prioritize and maximize the number of affordable units and moderate units, rather than developing any additional above-market units to help alleviate our most urgent crisis.

County-owned land is funded by Santa Barbara County taxpayers and data shows that our greatest need is affordable housing units so that we can work, live, and play. We would like to elevate that a third of the county's employees (over 1000 employees) cannot afford to live within the county. Developing housing on county-owned land can help guarantee that housing units will go directly to local employees rather than out-of-town investors. This can help disrupt additional gentrification and can promote stability for our hard-working residents.

This approach has already been deemed successful by other employee housing developments. The County (which is the sixth most expensive in the nation) should also lead by example, demonstrating to Santa Barbara County residents that our voices have been heard and that our need for affordable and workforce housing units is urgent. We believe that it is imperative for the county government to promote affordable housing for food workers, school employees, and everyone else who makes our community thrive, especially while wages have not kept up with rents and real estate prices. It is time for the County to help form Santa Barbara County's legacy and to promote an inclusive and advancing community.

SBCAN also welcomes the leadership of the SB League of Women Voters, whose letter of April 26 is a comprehensive statement of the priorities and principles we share regarding the rezoning decisions the Board is tasked with. Pursuing that path, the LWV letter suggests, requires establishment of local public funding for affordable housing.

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Santa Barbara County Action Network (SBCAN) appreciates the opportunity to comment on this project.

Sincerely,

Nancy Avoce
Assistant Director

Dick Flacks
Co-President