



Item No. 8 Town of Atherton

CITY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT – REGULAR AGENDA

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

FROM: GEORGE RODERICKS, CITY MANAGER

DATE: MAY 17, 2023

SUBJECT: Consideration of Criteria for Housing Opportunity Site Selection.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Council review the revised Site Selection Criteria and, if appropriate, adopt as the criteria to be used by the City Council when considering opportunity sites for inclusion in the 2023-2031 6th Cycle Housing Element.

BACKGROUND

At the City Council Meeting on March 15, 2023, the City Council discussed feedback from the Atherton Housing Coalition and briefly discussed other housing opportunity sites for consideration. Following discussion, the City Council asked that the Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Housing review various criteria that could be used by the City Council for selection of housing opportunity sites and return to the Council with a recommendation on what criteria should be considered.

On April 19, 2023, the City Council reviewed the Ad Hoc Subcommittee's Report and recommended modifications to the criteria, as presented. The Council asked that the criteria be returned for Council consideration at the next Regular Meeting (May 17, 2023). Subsequent to the Council's action, the Mayor disbanded the Subcommittee due to no further directives from the Council for work by the Subcommittee.

ANALYSIS

The Criteria were revised as per Council direction. Revised criteria are shown on Attachment A. The Council directed that of the remaining 7 criteria, a property would need to meet 6 of the criteria and as re-written, they look as follows:

- 1) Is within 1/4-mile of the Town's major arterial as identified in the Town's General Plan (El Camino Real).
- 2) Is adjacent to or across the street from existing commercial or retail development (i.e. restaurants, stores, service industry and businesses).

- 3) Is adjacent to or across the street from other existing residential multi-family.
- 4) It has readily available access to infrastructure and utilities.
- 5) Does not present a need to mitigate existing environmental hazards.
- 6) Allows for the implementation of objective privacy buffers relative to adjacent properties, such as setbacks, height limitations, landscape screening, fencing, and ingress/egress.
- 7) Includes a letter of interest from the existing property owner in support of the proposed development.

When the Council limited the criteria to meeting a minimum of 6 and eliminated “denser”, the Council significantly restricted their application. When strictly applied, there are no properties in the Town that can meet 6 of the 7 criteria if the property does not meet the 1st criteria. The issue is that if #1 does not apply, the property must meet #2 AND #3. While meeting #2 OR #3 may be possible for some properties on Valparaiso; meeting both is likely not possible and Valparaiso is the only other roadway in Atherton that abuts, in a small area, commercial or retail but those same properties do not abut multi-family. They may have abutted “denser” development, but that was also removed. In practical effect, removal of the word “denser” from #3 eliminated any parcel beyond the 1st parcel in along El Camino Real on the west side effectively making even the 1/4-mile irrelevant. This is because those “interior” parcels in the 1/4-mile would not meet the strict application of #2 AND #3.

So, from a practical perspective, in application only parcels 1-parcel in on the West Side of El Camino Real across from or adjacent to property in Menlo Park, Redwood City or the County would qualify as possible opportunity sites.

FISCAL IMPACT

None at this time.

GOAL ALIGNMENT

This Report and its contents are in alignment with the following Council Policy Goals:

- Goal Area F – Be Forward-Thinking, Well-Managed, and Well-Planned
- Goal Area E – Strengthen Community Engagement and Transparency
- Goal Area B – Preserve Small Town Character and Quality of Life

POLICY FOCUS

The Council Policy Focus should be on the identification of specific criteria that will be used by the Council for selection of opportunity sites when including them in the Housing Element Update.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notification was achieved by posting the agenda, with this agenda item being listed, at least 72 hours prior to the meeting in print and electronically. Information about the project is also

disseminated via the Town's electronic News Flash and Atherton Online. There are approximately 1,200 subscribers to the Town's electronic News Flash publications. Subscribers include residents as well as stakeholders –to include, but be not limited to, media outlets, school districts, Menlo Park Fire Protection District, service providers (water, power, and sewer), and regional elected officials.

COMMISSION/COMMITTEE FEEDBACK/REFERRAL

This item has not been before a Town Committee or Commission

ATTACHMENTS

1. Attachment A – Criteria for Housing Opportunity Sites