



We Advocate Thorough Environmental Review

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Kathryn Joyce
City of Mount Shasta
305 N. Mt. Shasta Blvd.
Mt. Shasta, CA 96067
Sent via email to kjoyce@mtshastaca.gov

RE: Public Comment on Mountain Townhomes Project Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration

Dear Planning Commissioners:

I am writing on behalf of We Advocate Thorough Environmental Review (W.A.T.E.R.), a California 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation dedicated to promoting quality local and regional planning, land use and development, as well as to preserve a healthy human and natural environment within the Siskiyou County area.

1). **Biological Resources:** There are wetlands/riparian habitat on the property that will be impacted by the project and these need to be thoroughly evaluated for the project impacts.

Biological Resources, item b (page 43): Would the project *“Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?”*

The ISMND acknowledges that there would be impacts to riparian habitat (i.e., permanent removal of riparian habitat) unless mitigations occur, and offers Mitigation Measure BIO-04:

“If it is determined prior to construction that impacts to jurisdictional waters and/or riparian habitat cannot be avoided, then the project proponent shall apply for any necessary permits from the USACE, CDFW, and the RWQCB. Impacts to jurisdictional waters and/or riparian habitat shall be mitigated in accordance with agency requirements to ensure no net loss of acreage or functions and values of waters of the U.S. and State. The project applicant will coordinate with CDFW and, if needed, apply for a Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement if riparian habitat along the unnamed drainages on-site would be impacted by project construction activities.”

This is not a mitigation measure-- it is more of an outline of what needs to be included in this ISMND, i.e., determination of the potential impacts and specific plans for the avoidance, reduction, and/or compensation of/for the impacts. As written this section does not appear to be consistent with the requirements of CEQA since the public and agencies would not have the opportunity to evaluate the extent of potential impacts and the effectiveness of proposed mitigations. California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) has also noted this deficiency in its comment letter. This deficiency needs to be thoroughly addressed.

We note that CDFW has also asked for amendments to include promoting pollinators, protecting bats (MM-BIO-02) and nesting birds (MM BIO-03); we concur with these and all CDFW recommendations.

2). Please clarify and verify the correct address for the property:

There is confusion about the address of the proposed project. The ISMND gives the address as 735 Chestnut Street. Whereas all the maps in the ISMND show the project property is on the **east** side of Chestnut street, Google maps shows 735 Chestnut Street on the **west** side of the street approximately a half a block south of the site. A walk down Chestnut Street confirms properties on the east side have even-numbered addresses, whereas properties on the west side of Chestnut Street are odd-numbered. Should the proposed project also have an even-numbered address? Please clarify and verify the correct address for the project property.

Please note we have no objection to the project *per se*. We certainly understand the need for low income and affordable housing in the City, and the property seems suitably located within the City for that purpose as long as the biological impacts are properly evaluated and mitigated. It is the ISMND with which we take issue, and its deficiencies could be easily addressed with a thorough study and appropriate mitigations so the project can go forward. We offer these comments in the spirit of making this project environmentally sound.

Sincerely,



Geneva M. Omann
Secretary, Board of Directors
We Advocate Thorough Environmental Review