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From: Sherman Lewis
Sent: Monday, March 03, 2014 12:42 PM
To: Barbara Halliday; Francisco Zermeno - Forward; Michael Sweeney; CityClerk; Marvin Peixoto; Morad Fakhrai; Al Mendall; Greg Jones; Mark Salinas; Kelly McAdoo; Fran David; David Rizk; Pat Siefers
Subject: Comment on Integral Communities project, Council Agenda 4, March 4, 2014

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I oppose the project proposed for the Mervyns site for a number of reasons. As long as Hayward tries to imitate conventional development elsewhere, even if it gets investors, it will never distinguish itself as a leader for sustainability, and will be unable to improve its reputation. Without a reputation as a place of new and better ideas, our growth will be modest. The biggest single policy area that needs a major overhaul is transportation. Like all other cities in the Bay Area except San Francisco, Hayward has no real sustainable transportation policies.

The Mervyns development does not have a context of city policies supporting sustainable transportation, and the proposal itself also lacks anything meaningful. The policies needed are discussed in my book, *Creation Care for Neighborhoods*, and in my report, "Ideas for Hayward." These ideas are specific, complex, and based on market economics and community participation. These ideas are working well elsewhere and are well understood by transportation experts.

The loss of the parking structure is an odd thing for me to complain about, but it illustrates a problem: it wastes a valuable asset which is virtually free and the parking gets replaced only by costly new construction. The project is 100% vehicle accessed, with parking lots and bundled parking underneath in what could be a far less car-dependent development, given its location downtown and near BART. This is possible only because of the under-pricing of car use and an excessive use which degrades pedestrian potential.

As to design, I was struck by how horrible the commercial building looked to me. This kind of thing seems to be fashionable, but is not to my taste. It really needs residential above, which would also increase the density needed for economies of scale that support walking. The combination of loss of parking and inefficient use of the commercial land reduces the contribution the site can make to downtown and its own commercial viability. The first proposal was better, with more than twice the housing and almost twice the commercial.

It looks like the commercial is accessible from the street, but doesn't look practical as there is no reason or easy way for a pedestrian to be on the sidewalk. The walk access will be from parking, and there seems to be none on Foothill. Those middle retail doors on Foothill are in trouble. To see how it should work, the development across the street has parking opposite store entrances. The housing seems to have the same problem, with poorly accessible front doors. They look like front doors but won't function as front doors. Design defeats function.

Would somebody please tell the architects at Angeleno that it is not a "drive isle" but a "drive aisle."

The housing design looks good above the first floor, but ground level is all pavement and parking underneath, resulting in a Great Wall of Garage Doors. The project will need some maps for guests at their parking showing them the route to the front doors. Design has abandoned functional flow in favor of the abstract idea of a front door.

The streets average about 21 feet wide between buildings about 30 feet high, and the walkways to reach front doors are even narrower, 15 feet, with a "meandering" walkway that goes in a straight line and trees that grow into buildings. (What is going on at Angeleno?) This creates a crowded aesthetic to achieve density, which is necessary given the design assumptions. The gross density of 17 units per acre uses the site very efficiently for three stories. The floor plans and three story height are similar to the Bayview concept, but Bayview has no parking underneath and building face setbacks are 32 to 36 feet and thus Bayview has a more spacious feel, and walkways instead of cars, for real pedestrian functionality.

A denial of this project will have price to pay. Hayward will lose some credibility among larger developers as a place to try to invest. There will be delay in achieving redevelopment of the site. Conventional developers may not be interested in doing what the city wants. A more innovative, sustainable approach may not have the cachet to attract entrepreneurial developers. The City may not be able to develop a full, effective set of policies for transportation sustainability that would provide a context for a sustainable development.

So, we have to make a judgment in the face of uncertainty about the future. In my view, for the City to be entrepreneurial after the loss of Redevelopment, it needs to pursue Cap and Trade funds to subsidize cutting edge projects that include sustainable transportation.

Mark Butler and Evan Knapp have worked long and hard to create an economically and politically viable project. The underlying problem is not their fault, and Hayward could do worse. My comments here are consistent with what I've been saying for some time and are based on my understanding of the Crisis of the Anthropocene. I am pessimistic about the ability of our culture to respond. The problem from my point of view is that we need to do so much better, for the earth and for Hayward.

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