



SANTA CRUZ COUNTY GROUP

Of The Ventana Chapter

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To: Santa Cruz City Council

Re: Ocean Street Extension Project

The Sierra Club is concerned that the rezoning for the Ocean Street Extension project is entirely inappropriate. Rezoning an area for 40 units where 9 units are allowed is unconscionable because it will result in unmitigated increased traffic, reduced open space, increased demand on water and infrastructure, while adversely affect wildlife.

Ocean Street Extension is not an area that supports infill. Rather, it is a last fragment of rural land that provides habitat for an abundance of wildlife. Converting an area that is currently open space to a dense housing situation does not abide by our city's General Plan nor our city's Corridor Plan. Further, the proposed plan may damage heritage trees and may adversely affect nesting birds that are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

The increased traffic caused by this project will further exacerbate the current traffic problems along the Highway 17 and Highway 1 as well as at the intersection between Ocean Street Extension and Graham Hill road. The elimination of the bike path along Ocean Street Extension will further cause issues as people will be less likely to bike to downtown and other locations. This increased traffic will result in more car emissions and contribute to global warming.

There is no substantial public benefit proposed for this project which is required for a variance. The "benefit" proposed of a sidewalk is not significant enough to justify rezoning for 40 units when currently there is a dirt path that serves as a sidewalk. A true public benefit would be something such as a park or community garden that many would benefit from.

The EIR's assertion that the increased demand on water supply is not significant is false. The EIR asserts that "under existing conditions" there are adequate supplies and that the additional demand would not result in a substantial increase during dry years. However the city's adopted recommendations from the Water Supply Advisory Committee account for demand that is in accordance with the City's General Plan growth projections, not for increased population growth that is in addition to the General Plan growth projections. The increased population will stress our city's water supply.

The Sierra Club urges the City Council to not grant a variance for this project in an area that is not suited to high density housing.

Sincerely,
Erica

Erica Stanojevic
Conservation Committee Chair
Sierra Club, Santa Cruz County Group