

**Planning Commission
Staff Report**

September 11, 2013
Item 6.a.

SUBJECT: Work Session for P13-2078

APPLICANTS: SummerHill Apartment Communities

PROPERTY OWNER: Las Positas Property, LLC

PURPOSE: Work Session to review and receive comments on a Preliminary Review application to demolish the existing office building and construct 177 apartment units and related site improvements on a 5.9-acre site

GENERAL PLAN: Mixed Use/Business Park

ZONING: Planned Unit Development – Mixed Use (PUD-MU)

LOCATION: 5850 West Las Positas Boulevard

EXHIBITS:

- A. Planning Commission Work Session Discussion Points
- B. Preliminary Development Plans and Applicant's Project Summary
- C. Ordinance No. 2030, Rezoning the Subject Site
- D. Public Comment
- E. Location Map and Noticing Map

I. BACKGROUND

In January 2012, the City Council approved rezoning of nine sites throughout the City for high-density multifamily development in order to meet the City's share of the regional housing needs (Ordinance No. 2030). One of the approved sites is the CM Capital Properties site located at 5850 and 5758 West Las Positas Boulevard. The CM Capital Properties site consists of two parcels: a 5.9-acre parcel located at 5850 West Las Positas Boulevard and a 6.7-acre parcel located at 5758 West Las Positas Boulevard. These two parcels are not required to be developed together.

SummerHill Apartment Communities have submitted a Preliminary Review application for the development of a multifamily housing project on the 5.9-acre site located at 5850 West Las Positas Boulevard.

The purpose of the work session is to receive comments from the Commission and public regarding the project and discuss how the project would meet, or require exceptions from, the *Housing Site Development Standards and Design Guidelines* (hereafter referred to as *Design Guidelines*), adopted by City Council on August 21, 2012. The site is identified as Site #9 in the *Design Guidelines*, and has a density requirement of 30 units per acre, which results in 378 units on the entire 12.6-acre site. The proposed project is to construct 177 residential units on an approximately 5.9-acre portion of the site, meeting the density requirement of 30 dwelling units per acre. No action on the project will be taken at the work session. If an affordable housing agreement is part of the project, the agreement will be scheduled for a recommendation by the Housing Commission. The development of the project will require Planned Unit Development (PUD) Development Plan approval, which is subject to review and approval by the City Council, following review and recommendation by the Planning Commission.

II. SITE DESCRIPTION AND SURROUNDING AREA

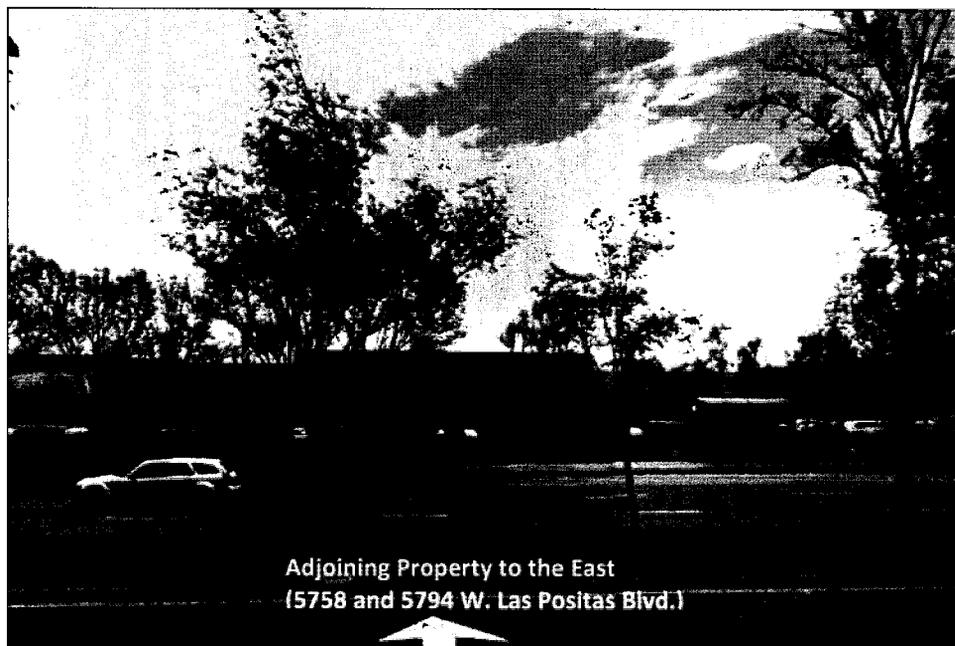
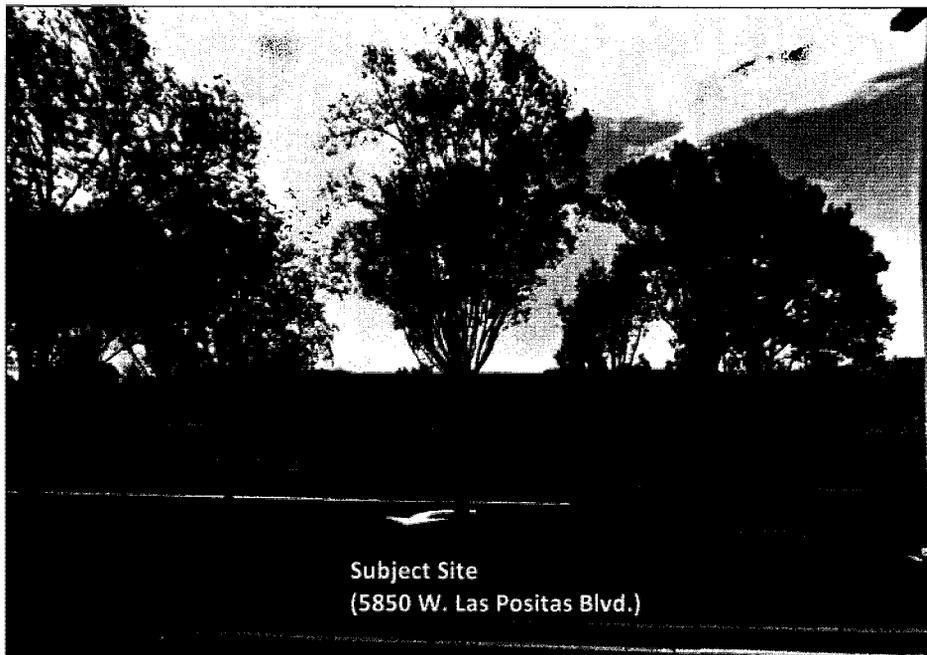
The subject site is located on the south side of West Las Positas Boulevard, across from Thomas Hart Middle School, within the Hacienda Business Park. The subject 5.9-acre site and the adjoining 6.7 acre site to the east are collectively referred as the 12.6-acre Site #9 of the Design Guidelines. Please see aerial map below.



Project Location Map

The project site fronts on West Las Positas Boulevard and backs up to Arroyo Mocho (south). The site was initially developed in 1984 for AT&T and later was clinical laboratories for SmithKline Beecham. The building is a one-story building, approximately 88,512 square feet in floor area. It is currently vacant.

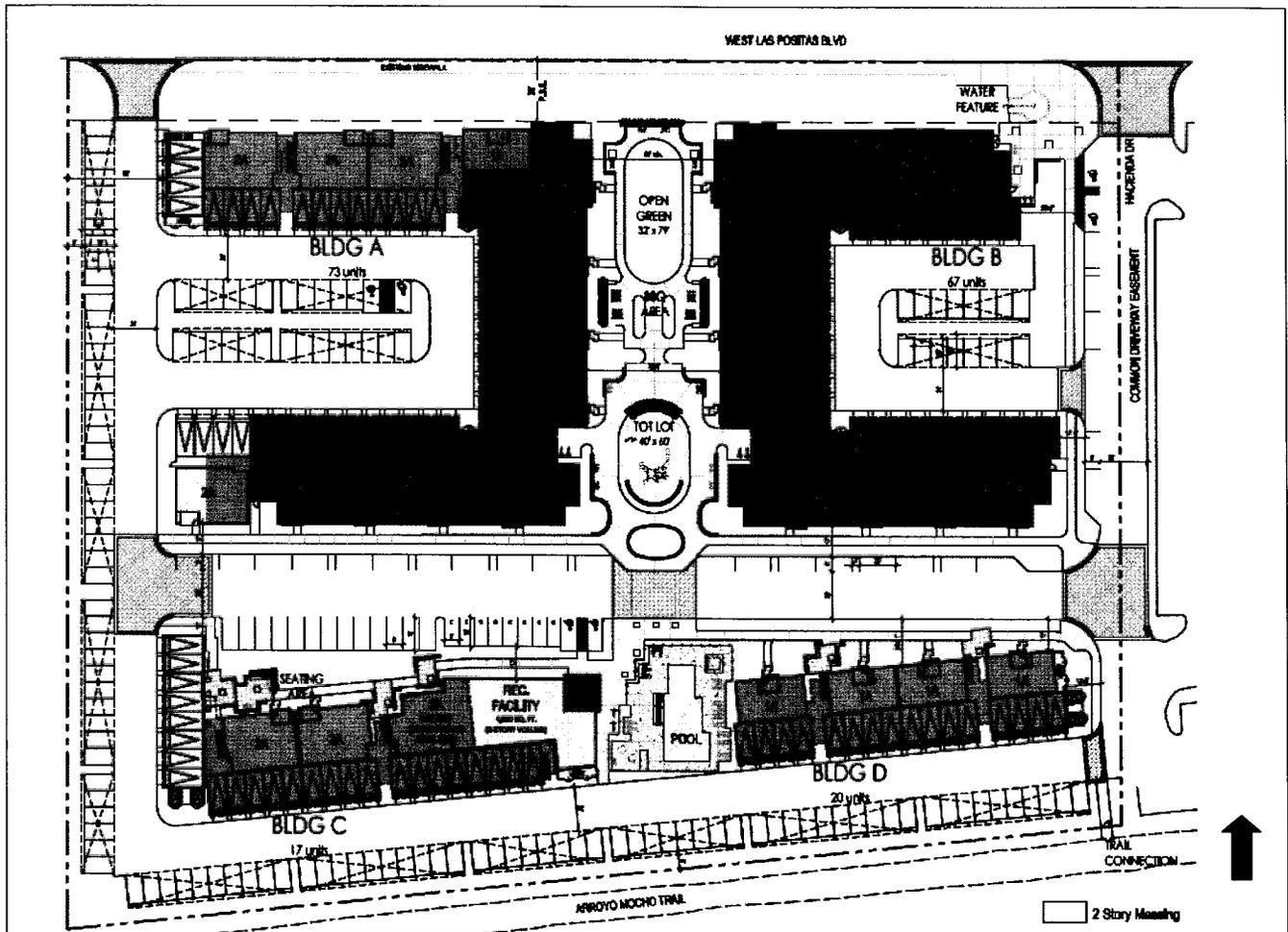
The site is generally flat. A bus stop within a shelter served by Livermore Amador Valley Transit Authority (LAVTA) is located in front of the building to the east, and also across West Las Positas Boulevard at the middle school.



Adjacent properties include one-story office buildings to the east and west, Thomas Hart Middle School to the north, and Arroyo Mocho lies to the south. Further beyond the arroyo to the south are single-family residential developments.

III. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed development is summarized below:



Proposed Site Plan

Site Layout

- The proposed development would utilize the two existing entrances/exits off West Las Positas Boulevard. One entrance/exit is located near the western edge of the site and the other one is located near the eastern edge of the site. The project's main entrance would be from the eastern edge of the site at the existing signalized intersection at West Las Positas Boulevard and Hacienda Drive. The main internal street would be located between Building B and the eastern property line. It would wrap around Building B then continue west. The proposed Buildings A and B would be located on the north side of the main internal street and Buildings C and D would be located on the south side. Secondary internal streets are located along the site perimeter and between the buildings and carports.
- An open space area and tot lot would be located between Buildings A and B; a pool/spa would be located between Buildings C and D.

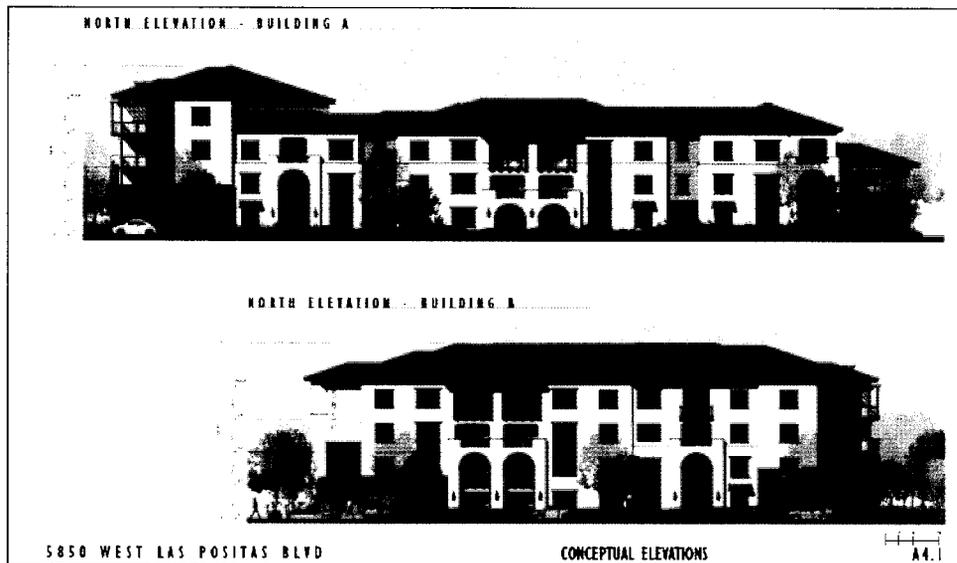
- Pedestrian paths within the complex are proposed between residential buildings, the open space area, and recreation uses.

Buildings

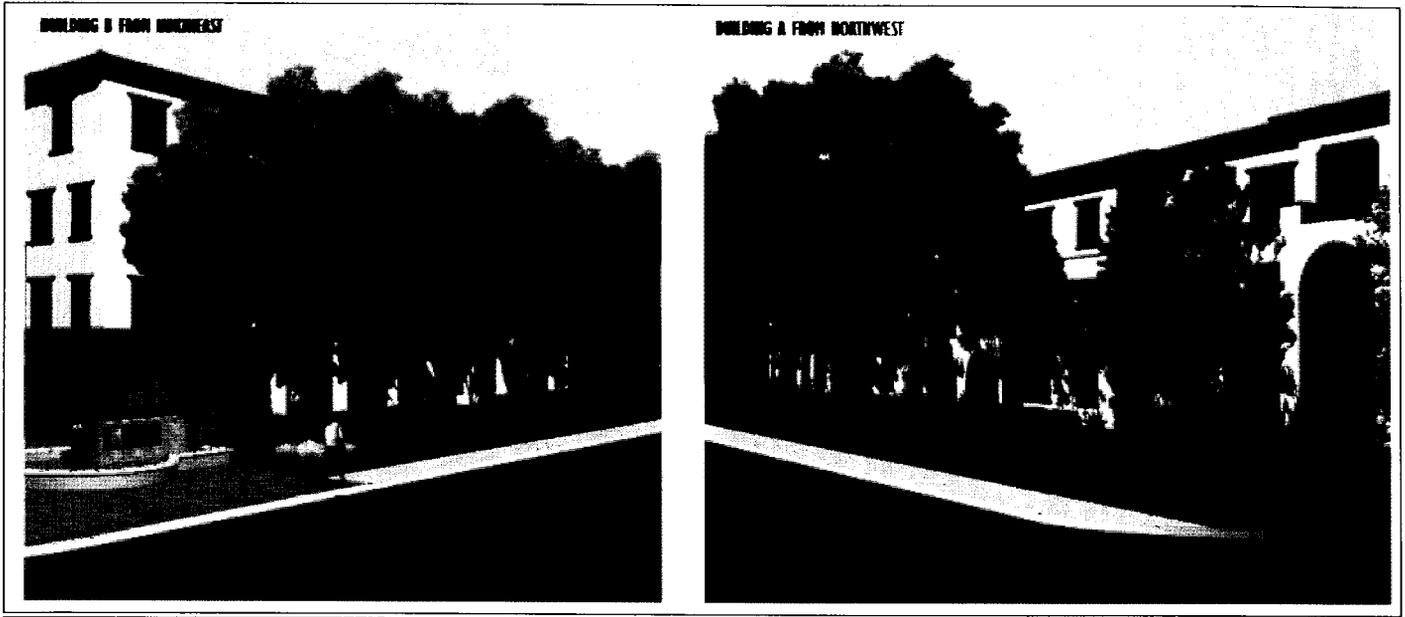
- The project would include four residential buildings housing a total of 177 residential units. Buildings A and B would be U shaped buildings located on the northern portion of the site fronting West Las Positas Boulevard. Buildings C and D would be rectangular shaped buildings located in the southern portion of the parcel having a view to Arroyo Mocho. The following table provides a summary of the proposed residences and building heights.

Building	Residential Units	Stories
A	73	2-4
B	67	4
C	17	2-4
D	20	3
Total	177	--

- The proposed elevations present a Spanish influenced architectural style. The materials that are proposed include stucco exterior finish, stone veneer, wood-like trim for the windows, tile roof, wrought iron patio and balcony railings, and awnings.



Conceptual Building Elevations on West Las Positas Boulevard



Conceptual Elevation of Buildings A & B

Floor Plans

- A combination of one- to three-bedroom units are proposed. The proposed project includes:
 - 88 one-bedroom units, ranging from 718 square feet to 785 square feet;
 - 72 two-bedroom units, ranging from 1,054 square feet to 1,069 square feet; and
 - 17 three-bedroom units approximately 1,298 square feet.

All residential units would include either a private patio (for ground-floor units) or a deck (for upper floor units) ranging from 56 square feet to 143 square feet.

Parking

- The proposed development would provide a total of 301 parking spaces in private garage spaces, covered parking spaces (carports), and surface parking spaces. The majority of parking spaces are standard-size parking stalls; nine of the parking stalls are compact-sized parking stalls.

Pleasanton Municipal Code (PMC) Section 18.88.030 requires a minimum of 2 spaces for each of the first 4 units and 1.5 spaces for each additional unit for apartments with 2 bedrooms or less, and a minimum of two spaces per unit for apartments with three or more bedrooms. At least one of the required spaces per unit is required to be located in a garage or carport. One visitor space is required for each 7 units. A total of 156 units have 2 or fewer bedrooms and thus the parking requirement for these units is 242 spaces. A total of 17 units are 3-bedroom units and thus 34 parking spaces are required, yielding a total parking requirement of 276 parking spaces (252 of these spaces are in a carport or garage). Since 177 units are proposed, 25 visitor spaces are required and 25 are proposed. The project meets the parking requirements of the PMC for the total number of required spaces,

the number of required covered spaces, and the number of guest parking spaces. Please refer to the follow table for parking requirements.

	Required	Proposed
Parking for Residents	276 spaces	276 spaces
Parking for Guests	25 spaces	25 spaces
Total	301 spaces	301 spaces

Open Space

- The Design Guidelines require private open space be provided at each residential unit as well as a common open space be provided for the entire complex. As proposed, private open space is provided by patios and balconies, and group open space is distributed throughout the site. A community gathering area is proposed in the center of the site. The open space area includes picnic tables, outdoor grill, seat-walls, and shade trellises. A tot lot with play structures, a lap pool and a spa are also proposed. In addition to open space area, a club room with a gourmet kitchen and a fully equipped fitness center would be located in Building C with easy access to the pool/spa area.

Landscaping

- A variety of species of trees, shrubs, and groundcover are proposed throughout the residential complex. The preliminary landscape plan provides general information on the plantings for the open space areas and the development in general. The proposed project will result in the removal of several ornamental trees that are currently planted in the existing parking lot area and landscaped areas on the site.

Bus Shelter

- There are two existing Livermore Amador Valley Transit Authority (LAVTA) bus stops near the project site – one is located to the east of the project site, and the other one is located across W. Las Positas Boulevard at the middle school. No additional stops are requested by LAVTA for this project.

Trail Access

- There is an existing trail along the south side of the arroyo; no trail currently is located on the north side of the arroyo except for a short segment between Hopyard Road and the Chabot Canal. Traffic Engineering Division recommends an access to the arroyo providing access to a future trail. The applicant will be working with Zone 7 to provide an access gate to the future trail along the north side of Arroyo Mocho.

IV. CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE WORK SESSION

Staff is presenting the Commission with the preliminary plans for consideration and comments. This work session will allow the Planning Commission to provide direction to the applicant and staff regarding any issues it wishes to be addressed prior to the project formally returning to the Planning Commission for a recommendation to the City Council. The areas noted below are where staff would find the Commission’s input most helpful. A list of these discussion

topics and specific questions regarding the proposal is attached to this report as Exhibit A for the Planning Commission's consideration and discussion.

Housing Site Development Standards and Design Guidelines

The following comments were provided to the applicant regarding consistency with the Standards. The applicant has indicated the items will be met or a request for exceptions to the Standards will be made. For the Commission's reference, the page and section number for each item in *italics* is also included.

Plans will be Modified by Applicant to Comply

1. Provide building entries for Buildings A and B that face West Las Positas Boulevard.

Development Standard C.1.b, page 37.

2. Enhance the building entries so that they become a prominent feature of the front façade and identify access to individual units.

Development Standard C.1.c, page 37.

3. Provide both landscape screening and fencing between the subject development and the adjacent commercial development to the west.

Development Standards, page 55.

4. Provide low walls and landscaping to screen parking at the northwest corner of the site.

Development Standard A., page 24.

Exceptions Requested by the Applicant

1. The carports would be located eight feet from the western property line. The applicant could remove carport parking along the western property line and still conform to the requirement of providing one covered parking space per residential unit. The applicant prefers to keep the carports. Staff suggested that the applicant discuss the proposed carport location with the adjacent property owners to the west to determine if they would object and/or request alternative mitigation.

Special Design Standards and Guidelines, page 55: No structure (not including light fixtures) shall be located within 50 feet of the western property line.

2. The existing western entrance would serve as one of the two entrances to the proposed development. It should, like the eastern entrance, be designed as an internal street. Sheet A1.2 shows it is designed as an alley.

Development Standards, page 13, requires a distinct hierarchy of circulation including public streets, internal streets, alleys, etc. Section A1.b states that alleys should not be used for primary circulation.

Discussion Point

- A. *Would the Planning Commission support the exceptions noted above if the project were to move forward as proposed?*

Site Plan. As proposed, the buildings meet the setback requirements. The site plan shows a feathering of densities with the lowest densities by the Arroyo Mocho and adjacent one-story commercial development and that stories above the second story on the west elevation are stepped back. The project's main entrance would be from the eastern edge of the site at the existing signalized intersection at West 0Las Positas Boulevard and Hacienda Drive. The applicant will provide building entries for Buildings A and B that face West Las Positas Boulevard to meet the Design Guidelines requirements. Staff believes that a pedestrian connection needs to be provided between West Las Positas Boulevard to the proposed open space area.

Discussion Point

- B. *Are the on-site circulation, parking layout, feathering of densities, stepping back stories above the second story, and positioning of the buildings acceptable?*
- C. *Should a pedestrian access be provided directly from West Las Positas Boulevard to the proposed open space area?*
- D. *Are the proposed on-site recreation facilities and amenities acceptable?*

Building Design. Given the high visibility of the site directly on a major thoroughfare, staff feels that the buildings will need to be designed with a high quality visual image. Staff believes that the proposed buildings are generally well designed. Staff has made the following suggestions to the applicant:

- Provide additional details such as exposed rafter tails, window planter boxes, wrought-iron detailing, etc.
- Modify and enhance the individual unit entries on the ground level so that they would be a prominent feature of the building.
- "Punched in" the windows from the exterior building wall.
- Provide an enhanced stucco finish such as Santa Barbara finish (Santa Barbara finish is a smooth, stucco finish with minor relief textures and a subtle, variegated color.)

Discussion Point

- E. *Are the residential building designs, colors and materials, and heights acceptable?*

V. PUBLIC COMMENT

Notice of the Planning Commission's public work session on this item was sent to property owners within 1,000 feet of the subject property. A map showing the noticing area is attached to this report. The public notice was also published in *The Valley Times*.

Mr. Don Brennen, 3291 Curtis Circle, emailed staff expressing opposition and concerns regarding the proposed development (see Exhibit D). Mr. Brennen stated that he is very concerned about the impacts relating to noise, traffic, crime, and other components of our city infrastructure.

Staff has also received an email from a resident; expressing concerns regarding the proposed development (see Exhibit D). This resident wishes to remain anonymous.

VI. ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Since the Planning Commission will take no formal action on the project at the work session, no environmental document accompanies this work session report. Environmental documentation will be provided in conjunction with the Planning Commission's formal review of the PUD application.

VII. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission review the attached material, take public testimony, and make suggestions/comments to the applicant and staff regarding the development of the site.

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