

Update: Marinwood Village

There have been some emails to my office regarding the status of the Marinwood Village. It was Sept. 26, 2006 when members of the community, the property owner and the county staff stood before the Board of Supervisors to herald and support the completion of the Marinwood Village conceptual plan that included a green and sustainable, bikeable, walkable, transit oriented affordable mixed use housing and retail development with a plaza gathering space (and most important to the community...a market). The Board of Supervisors adopted the conceptual plan into the County General Plan in November of 2007.

www.co.marin.ca.us/depts/CD/main/fm/cwpdocs/CWP_CD2.pdf

You can watch the video of the Sept. 26 Board of Supervisors Meeting at the following site. Go to agenda item 21: www.co.marin.ca.us/depts/BS/Archive/Meetings.cfm?YYYY=2006. Since that day, there has been both movement forward and some delays. The project progress was delayed first with the discovery of a plume of toxic dry cleaning chemicals from a former plaza occupant. This "brown field site" must be cleaned and safe for the rebuilding of food sales facilities and dwelling units. Mr. Hoytt and any new owner and developer of the site must work out the details of how this will happen before anything can be built there. After negotiations with several developers did not materialize, Peter Brandon, a developer who lives in Lucas Valley and manages Northern California development for Trammell Crow Company, will hopefully bring the Village to life. Whether or not any of the buildings can be salvaged for reuse will be determined when the brown field issue is resolved. How many units and the location will be a factor when determining whether or not any of the current buildings will be incorporated.

But the community conceptual plan and the county general plan will not allow more than 100 units and both environmental studies and traffic studies will need to be conducted on whatever proposal comes forward. Another issue that is being questioned is the need to have affordable units in the plan. One of the issues that emerged as important in the discussions of the community plan was the need for affordable housing for our teachers and service workers. A family of 4 earning less than \$60,000 per year would be eligible for low income affordable housing. Teachers' salaries fall within this range. It has been reported that there are teachers in the Dixie School District who would love an opportunity to live and work in the community and not commute daily from Santa Rosa or the East Bay.

It has been reported that affordable units would look the same as market units and fit into the mix in the Village. Twenty percent is automatically required in unincorporated Marin for developments, but more can be achieved through partnerships with foundations, tax credits, working with nonprofit housing organizations and state and local housing funds. The general plan states up to 50% of the units could be affordable...but the percentage will depend on the financial package that is able to be achieved and the affordability levels can roughly range from very low income (less than 40% - 60% of the median income); low income (60% - 80% of the median income); and moderate income (80% to 120% of the median income). In Marin the median income has ranged between \$92,000 to \$96,000 per year, so a family earning \$95,000 per year could qualify for the moderate income affordable units.

Finally, in my discussions with members of the neighborhood, I find that people are generally eager to see the process move forward, they want to be part of the discussions and updates, they want the Village to be an asset to the community both for quality of life and

property values and mostly, everyone wants the market. The county staff and the developer and I are very committed to working with all members of the community as the next stages of planning materialize. The developer has expressed interest in making a presentation about a range of ideas once some of the technical issues are worked out. I am asking that we continue to allow the process to work and that we remain engaged and respectful of each other as we move ahead. Collaboratives can be challenging...but in the end when all voices are heard and issues addressed, I am sure that Marinwood will end up with an amazing project to show for it and the Village will be something we can all be proud of.