



Friday, February 22, 2008

Mayor Tony Spitaleri
And City Councilmembers,
Planning Commissioners
Sunnyvale City Hall
456 West Olive Avenue
Sunnyvale, CA 95086

RE: Luminaire Development Proposal - SUPPORT

Dear Mayor Spitaleri and Members of the City Council and Planning Commission:

For 50 years, Greenbelt Alliance has protected the region's working farms and natural areas while making the Bay Area's cities better places to live. A key component of our work is identifying where new growth should occur and which development proposals best meet the needs of the region. Our Compact Development Team (CDT) endorses and advocates for livable, transit-accessible communities with a wide range of housing options for families of all sizes and income levels. The CDT evaluated the Luminaire project proposed by Trumark Companies using an established set of guidelines. We write in support of this development because we feel it will be a gain for this neighborhood. Due to its location, its pedestrian-friendly aspects, and its inclusiveness, the Sunnyvale Planning Commission and City Council should approve the Luminaire proposal.

The Luminaire project is bound by State Route 237 to the north, Lawrence Station Road to the east, Elko Drive to the south, and Lawrence Expressway to the west. A network of existing bike lanes surrounds it. Trumark proposes 348 rental homes, 16,000 square feet of retail, amenities such as a swimming pool and History Walk, and open space. It has been said many times that the key to real estate is location. Trumark's selection of this site shows they are aware of this important principle. By adding compact new homes to a jobs-rich area well served by VTA, Trumark is ensuring that residents of Luminaire will not have to jump in the car for every errand and will have the option of taking transit, or even walking, to work. The project is also near downtown, meaning that this is an appropriate place for Sunnyvale to be growing.

Every new development is an opportunity to remedy the car-oriented growth of the past. Realizing this, Trumark has proposed a project that adds a pedestrian-friendly edge, with welcoming front stoops, along Lawrence Expressway. Clever design features, including interior courtyards, will help buffer the noise from the Expressway. Other amenities, including a koi pond, sculpture plaza, and street furniture, will contribute to the neighborhood's livability. A History Walk encircling the project will showcase the proud past of Sunnyvale as well as link up the project's open spaces, giving residents an opportunity for recreation. Since this project is mixed-use, featuring 16,000 square feet of retail space, future residents as well as those who currently work and live nearby will have a chance to access needed services on foot or via transit. Furthermore, all of the project's parking is wrapped by the development itself, meaning that pedestrians will no longer have to navigate the kind of vast parking lots that currently exist onsite.

The developer's commitment to building a high-quality community is enhanced by its plan to exceed the required percentage of homes to be rented at below-market rates. By proposing 15% of the homes in this project be affordable, Trumark is helping the City of Sunnyvale meet its obligation to provide homes we can

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all afford. This move ensures that people who work in Sunnyvale can also afford to live there, reducing the amount of time people have to spend stuck in traffic rather than relaxing with family and friends.

Greenbelt Alliance encourages Trumark to permanently provide VTA Eco Passes to residents of this development, to make sure bike racks and secure bicycle parking end up in the project, and to continue to explore the idea of shared parking as a way to provide only as much parking as is needed.

In closing, Greenbelt Alliance applauds the City of Sunnyvale's focus on existing infill sites for new homes, jobs, and shops. This kind of development combats climate change and alleviates pressure to pave over natural areas and working farms while providing homes for the people who live and work in the community. Greenbelt Alliance is particularly pleased that the developer is also seeking LEED certification from the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC). Nationwide, 65% of electricity consumption and 30% of greenhouse gas emissions come from buildings themselves, according to USGBC¹. By achieving LEED certification, the developer will greatly lower the footprint of this project, and thus the impact of Sunnyvale, on global climate change. For these reasons, Greenbelt Alliance strongly urges the Planning Commission and City Council's support of the Luminaire development.

Regards,

/s/

Marla Wilson
Livable Communities Outreach Coordinator

¹ <http://www.usgbc.org/DisplayPage.aspx?CMSPageID=1718>