

RECEIVED ON: July 11, 2022

Council Meeting: 07/12/22

Agenda Item No. 13.A

From: [Courtney Welch](#)
To: [WebMail - CCD](#)
Subject: July 12th Meeting: Proposed Villas of Friendly Hills Development
Date: Monday, July 11, 2022 10:31:09 AM
Attachments: [Whittier - Friendly Hills HAA Letter.pdf](#)

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Dear Whittier City Council,

I am submitting the attached letter as a written comment in regards to item 13.A.: Villas of Friendly Hills, on the July 12th meeting agenda.

--

Courtney Welch
Planning and Investigations Director
California Renters Legal Advocacy and Education Fund



CC: CM; ACM; CA; Council; Original to CC; Public Binder; Department



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California Renters Legal Advocacy and Education Fund

360 Grand Ave, #323
Oakland, CA 94612
hi@carlaef.org

Council Meeting: _____

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July 8, 2022

City of Whittier
13230 Penn Street
Whittier, CA 90602

Re: Proposed Villas of Friendly Hills Development.

Dear Whittier City Council and City Attorney,

The California Renters Legal Advocacy and Education Fund (CaRLA) submits this letter to inform the Whittier City Council that they have an obligation to abide by all relevant state housing laws when evaluating the proposed Villas of Friendly Hills townhome development. The Housing Accountability Act requires approval of zoning and general plan compliant projects, such as this one, unless findings can be made regarding specific, objective, written health and safety hazards.

As you are well aware, California remains in the throes of a statewide crisis-level housing shortage. New housing such as this is a public benefit. It will bring increased tax revenue, new customers to local businesses, decarbonization in the face of the climate crisis, but most importantly, it will reduce the displacement of existing residents into homelessness or carbon-heavy car commutes. The laws cited in this letter are designed to allow and require cities to approve of new homes over the objection of a small minority of neighbors. Research indicates that the anti-housing voices frequent in public hearings are disproportionately white, higher-income, and homeowners.¹ These voices do not represent the best interests of Whittier or the broader community. Approving developments like this one over these vocal objections is a step towards racial, economic, environmental, and social justice. We urge Whittier to approve of this development because it is the right decision for the City and is required by state law.

CaRLA is a 501(c)3 non-profit corporation whose mission includes advocating for increased access to housing for Californians at all income levels, including low-income households. Consistent with the General Plan, the proposed development will provide additional badly needed housing and uses an integrative design with adequate open space, off-street parking, and amenities. In addition, the proposed

¹ Einstein, Palmer, and Glick, *Who Participates in Local Government? Evidence from Meeting Minutes*, Perspectives on Politics, Volume 17, Issue 1, March 2019
https://www.dropbox.com/s/k4kzph3ynal3xai/ZoningParticipation_Perspectives_Final.pdf?dl=0

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development appropriately balances landscaping, streetscape, and the privacy of each condominium.

While no one project will solve the regional housing crisis, the proposed development located at 9829 La Serna Drive is the kind of housing Whittier needs to mitigate displacement, provide shelter for its growing population, and arrest unsustainable housing price appreciation. You may learn more about CaRLA at www.carlaef.org.

Sincerely,



Courtney Welch
Director of Planning and Investigations
California Renters Legal Advocacy and Education Fund

California Renters Legal Advocacy and Education Fund - hi@carlaef.org

2044 Franklin St, Oakland, CA 94612

CC: CM; ACM; CA; Council; Original to CC; Public Binder; Department