

Interview Notes-Lower Income Household #1

1. *What type of home you live in (e.g., apartment, single-family home), what neighborhood you live in, and what about it makes the neighborhood feel you unique to you?*
 - Affordable housing. Lives in a ground floor apartment
 - What's Special: built right next to wildlife refuge. It's right next to the fence and get to look at it all day. Garden space next to apt and have hundreds of potted plants. Lots of work but it's special. Lot of birds
 - People are fairly independent
2. *When you think about Santa Cruz's character and what makes Santa Cruz Santa Cruz, what comes to mind?*
 - Lot of progressive people here – that's good
 - Spiritual
 - Appreciation for nature
 - Lots of groups to choose from
 - Neary lagoon and beaches
 - Santa Cruz is deficient in city parks according to report she read.
 - When pressed on buildings: likes old fashioned homes, especially West Side and that people maintain their gardens
 - Victorians and smaller "vernacular architecture" with wooden siding, small homes, really homey
 - Don't really care for modern, sleek, huge homes/mansion or cotemporary/modern stark looking architecture
 - Some of the West side ones look like industrial buildings. Post-modern, fashionable architecture - don't like it.
 - Doesn't like windows that are flat to the wall
 - Does like "huge stucco things on West Cliff"
3. *Do you think different neighborhoods have a different look and feel or is Santa Cruz more united overall than different?*
 - Likes walking in Santa Cruz because all different types of houses and people. Different neighborhoods have different feel, attitudes, styles.
 - Lived in Aptos, Soquel, rural areas. Previously lived in Westside in a condo, has also lived in manufactured home, Skyview drive in area (Thurber and Winkle across from drive in). And they're all different! Especially near the beach. Every day is different.
 - Wonderful outdoor places (Henry Cowell, Rancho del Oso), South of Carmel little Peninsula park, Big Basin, Fall Creek, Nicene Marks...loves all the outdoors.

- People in the rural area have communal living. Lot of quirky people around
- Really regret how divisive the politics have been
- Live very isolated from each other in the built environment – need to have communal and/or outdoor spaces where build new housing. Our complex has that and have influenced them to put in more garden boxes. Any new Multi-Family complexes should have spaces for people to spend time in the outdoors and gardening and develop a horticultural interest. Could be a courtyard.
 - Better to build housing away from the arterial so don't have the noise.
 - Current building does have a community room but people don't really use it. Mostly see each other outside
- Built environment could encourage people to get together if we build spaces for it. Know people with common buildings to eat dinner every week and that works ok. Western Drive. (Coyote Crossing Cohousing, also Walnut Commons) – nice people, political advocates for nature and people.
- Built environment is very influential in the community
- It's challenging for people to get tougher because we're not brought up to reach out to each other that much in the US. Other countries like Mexico people are closer to each other.
 - Most people who live in the building are from Latin American and Central America – for people displaced by earthquake of '89 so promoted to beach flats area so majority of population is Latinx (El Salvador, Mexico)
- Like to walk around neighborhood and see how yards look. People in apartments don't get to have that feeling of "this is my space" (eg yard, garden). Some people might not miss that but I do.

4. *On Water, Ocean, Soquel and Mission, what uses would you like to see along the street? Why?*

- Don't think residential is compatible with commercial because of noise from bottom floor and traffic/noise from arterials, exhaust from cars
- Wouldn't be an opportunity for garden space
- Would really hate living in that situation
- Don't think there should be residential on those streets.

5. *Think of the apartment-style and mixed-use buildings on commercial streets (e.g., Water, Ocean, Soquel). Which of the following items do you think are most important for a new building on these streets to include, even if they increase housing costs?* We know it's a hard choice, but you can only choose up two items.*

- Build them on stilts - best way to build in earthquake country because more stable and maybe address sea level rise. Might be too out of the box
- Mixed feelings on common spaces – we don't use ours except private parties and food distribution. Used to have resident meetings but hardly anyone came. Used to have a cooperative here but was dissolved because too much fighting. Non-profit wanted to have

power to evict people. In-fighting was vicious with being on cooperative was a real turn off. Just wasn't well designed.

- Don't have strong feelings that there should be community spaces in the buildings. Would advocate for open space. Everyone should have their own stoop or balcony (prefer that over larger common courtyard) but also want one larger area for trees, grassy area for children to play. Do think need to have grass and places for children to play. Need to be kid-friendly.

6. *The City can also loosen some requirements to reduce building costs, potentially making units less expensive to rent or buy. Which of the following items do you think are good trade-offs for less expensive housing? Choose all that apply.*

- Parking spaces should be minimized to encourage people to take transportation
 - Some ecology-oriented projects don't have any parking and people agree to not have cars. Know it's a big demand because people do need to get to work. Maybe 1 parking space for everyone instead of 2.
- Would not advocate for cheaper materials – advocate for more sustainable materials (e.g., bamboo). We use a lot of lumber which takes up forest. Need to stop using lumber
- Don't favor tall buildings. Know we need buildings. Development being planned now where there a community cooperative space will be torn down for a new development – lower Pacific area where the Hub is; Fabrica and Bike Church. *[Editor's note: The City has not received any application for development on this site; interviewee may be referring to a different project]* Going to be really tall. Another place too and there's no compensation for the neighborhood and for tall buildings. Should be allowed for affordable housing only. Don't want to build luxury housing for those commuting to out of town – rich people ruining, driving up the cost of housing for all.
- Turning point for Santa Cruz. What I call the old wood-framed houses - a lot of those are occupied by older people who will die off and new people will tear down to build McMansions. Won't house more people. Will be big fat housing (multi-million).
- Very glad don't have high-rises. To get more affordable housing built, support an extra story. It's as if these developers have the power to negotiate and make demands, and they don't really. That requirement [inclusionary housing] is a legal requirement, they shouldn't get anything in return for meeting the legal requirement. If they build more than the legal requirement, then they should get another story. If they're *giving* something then possibly get something.

7. *Other Comments?*

- Earthquake standards
- Native landscaping, adequate watering systems (not just irrigation systems but making sure it's maintained). Landscape companies don't maintain well. They spray the *plants* and the weeds when spraying for weeds.
- Need to be more precautions against black mold
- Very concerned about sea level rise and building in areas that will be flooded by year 2100 and even way before there

- Santa Cruz shouldn't build anything except affordable housing. Already a bedroom community for San Jose but that's not the purpose of this place.
 - *Follow up Question: What is the purpose?*
 - A place where people live in harmony with nature with micro grid so don't depend on CA grid with non-renewable energy and rolling blackouts and great possibility of being vulnerable to fires. A community that somehow manages to manage fire risk better than now/other cities (mostly related to rural area).
 - Compassionate city with connection with nature and the animals that are around us.
 - Well-managed for water, energy independent (micro-grid), every new building to have solar power (for micro grid), resist the expansion of UCSC because will place too many demands on the water and can't expand without straining the water. Remain small.
- Recognized that there is a conflict between staying small and building housing, but that's why they say build only affordable housing.
- City has tons of money to renovate intersection at River/Front/Highway 1, renovate Civic Auditorium. City employees see their purpose as leaving landmark buildings instead of being compassionate and creating a city where everyone is housed and where community takes care of each other.
- Want to see sustainability businesses that help us and others be sustainable – more cooperatives
- Earthquake standards – build on stilts. Look first and foremost at the future of these buildings that are going to take so much of the Earth's resources to build. Is this housing going to last beyond the sea level rise? Any of the buildings close to the ocean and in flood plains of San Lorenzo going to last? How long? Sea level rise.
- Also bike lockers would be a good idea. Know that locks can be destroyed. And bike paths. Good ones.