



City of Santa Cruz
Santa Cruz City Council

Appeal Regarding 900 High St. Santa Cruz [CP22-0164] *Planning Commission mtg of 30 NOV'23*

Dated: December 11, 2023, RE: Development on 900 High St Property We, the undersigned, hereby file an appeal to the planned development at 900 High Street, Santa Cruz, CA based on the following safety considerations, legal objections, and heritage tree preservation request.

1. We request that the City Council adds the following three geology recommendations to the conditions of approval for this development proposal.

Background: The proposed building site is located in the vicinity of underground limestone rock formations that are characterized by voids, fissures, caves, and sink holes. These “karst” formations are well-known in this area of Santa Cruz and have been mined for decades. The karsts are mechanically unstable and unsuitable for building upon, without significant mitigation.

It is our goal to ensure that the design of the proposed structures is appropriate to the dangers created by the site’s unique geology. The purpose of the recommendations below is to ensure that the developers are aware of the hazards, prior to finalized designs, and before construction begins.

Each of these recommendations were included by Pacific Crest Engineering in the Geologic Feasibility Letter prepared for this site, dated March 10, 2023. Further, we note that these precautions are standard operating procedure for any new construction considered on the UCSC campus.

- A. “One or more borings should be advanced near the steep quarry wall that lies to the east of the site to characterize the thickness and character of the marine terrace deposits that overlie the marble bedrock.”
- B. “Once the development footprint has finally been settled upon, the Project Geologist of Record should develop a design-level karst drilling program in conjunction with Project Geotechnical Engineer of Record for the portion of the habitable structure footprint where the risk related to karst hazards has not been adequately quantified for final design. “
- C. “We recommend that our firm be provided the opportunity for a review of the final design and specifications in order that our recommendations may be properly interpreted and implemented in the design and specification. If our firm is not accorded the privilege of making the recommended review, we can assume no responsibility for misinterpretation of our recommendations.”

2. There is no authority to amend land use to a subdivided piece of property.

The project site is undergoing a division into two distinct parcels. The first parcel is already developed and houses a church with land use, while the second parcel, spanning 2 acres, remains undeveloped. This division effectively increases the density of the site, as the proposal involves transferring residential density from the developed property to the underdeveloped parcel. From a legal standpoint, there is no

authority to transfer the housing density permitted on the resulting developed parcel to the other underdeveloped parcel (2 acres). It's important to note that the resulting developed parcel has a well-established land use, having served as a church for the past 64 years, with all necessary infrastructure and operations in place. Just because the city won a case on Eucalyptus St. doesn't create new law.

3. We would specifically like to add to the conditions of approval concerns of the heritage trees along the easterly property line of the Springtree HOA. Springtree HOA and homeowners are concerned that either the developer or property owner will come back at a later date, requesting the removal or disfigurement of the remaining heritage trees along the eastern property line between the development site and our lower quarry area. We would like it to be a condition of approval that the developer be restricted from endangering these heritage trees before, during and after development of the site.

We appreciate through this process of appeals and conversations that 6 items have been added to the Conditions of Approval. We hope with this appeal to get further clarifications and additions.

Dated: 10 December 2023

Representing Springtree HOA and Westlake Neighbors Association

By: Norman Tardif Norman Tardif

831-331-7733

630 Meder St

SC