



County of San Mateo

Inter-Departmental Correspondence

Department: BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
DISTRICT 2
File #: 24-129

Board Meeting Date: 2/27/2024

Special Notice / Hearing: None
Vote Required: Majority

To: Honorable Board of Supervisors
From: Supervisor Noelia Corzo, District 2
Supervisor Warren Slocum, District 4
Subject: Resolution opposing the establishment of an historic district in the Baywood neighborhood of the City of San Mateo

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt a resolution opposing the establishment of an historic district in the Baywood neighborhood of the City of San Mateo, urging the San Mateo Heritage Alliance to withdraw its historic district application for the Baywood neighborhood, and calling on the State Historical Resources Commission to reject the application.

BACKGROUND:

In November 2023, the San Mateo Heritage Alliance (Alliance) announced its intent to establish a historic district in the Baywood neighborhood of the City of San Mateo. The group has initiated the process of having the proposed district listed on the National Register of Historic Places (National Register). This move could severely restrict new homes from being built in the district by imposing new permitting requirements and circumventing state housing laws. This would exacerbate San Mateo County's dire housing shortage and homelessness crisis.

Moreover, the Alliance has stated its intent to pursue historic designations for multiple other districts in the City of San Mateo, further threatening the city's ability to meet its housing needs. By circumventing state housing laws and preventing needed housing from being built in affluent areas, historic district designations would reinforce patterns of segregation and housing discrimination and threaten the city's compliance with state law requiring California cities to Affirmatively Further Fair Housing (AFFH).

Restrictions on housing development have been used throughout history to perpetuate patterns of segregation by creating racially and economically exclusive enclaves. Baywood is the only neighborhood in San Mateo that the Bay Area Equity Atlas currently classifies as a "Segregated Area of White Wealth," and unduly restricting housing development in this district would reinforce existing

segregation.

DISCUSSION:

Given the foregoing, this resolution calls on the Alliance to withdraw its application to add the Baywood neighborhood to the National Register, it urges the State Historical Resources Commission (which, under law, reviews nominations of California properties for placement on the National Register) to reject the application, and it states clearly that the Board of Supervisors opposes this historic district designation.

Beyond imposing additional restrictions on development in the district, a historic district designation could impose additional undue costs and restrictions on homeowners. A historic designation could impose bureaucratic regulations that would restrict a homeowners' ability to upgrade or maintain basic elements of their own homes. This designation could also impact homeowners' ability to access financing, access insurance, or sell their property. These consequences of a historic district designation are unreasonable restrictions on a property owner's basic use of their own property.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Adopting this resolution has no fiscal impact. Additional restrictions on housing construction in the Baywood neighborhood could reduce property tax receipts.