



Town of Moraga

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

November 7, 2012

To whom this may concern:

Amy Skewes-Cox served as a Contract Planner for the Hetfield Subdivision Project from April through July of 2012. Amy assisted Town staff by preparing the following items:

- Two major Staff Reports;
- Resolution for certification of the Environmental Impact Report;
- Resolution for adoption of a Conceptual Development Plan;
- Resolution for a Conditional Use Permit (which included extensive conditions of approval); and
- Findings for adoption of the EIR.

When Amy came on board, the Draft and Final EIRs had been circulated for public review and the Planning Commission had directed the applicant to pursue an 8-lot single-family subdivision, an alternative that the EIR had evaluated. The neighbors and open space advocates expressed concerns about the alternative, primarily due to active landslides on the site, corrective grading requirements, and the visual impacts of the project. Amy worked with Town staff, the applicant, and the public to craft an alternative that was acceptable to both the applicant and the neighbors. Amy used her land planning skills and her thorough understanding of CEQA to develop a final recommendation. This recommendation for a 7-lot alternative included narrower lots that were more compatible with the nearby neighborhood and avoided an additional landslide and the associated corrective grading. The Planning Commission approved this alternative with a 6:1 vote. Most importantly, the applicant and the opposition commented that they both felt the approved project represented a fair compromise. As a result, neither side appealed the project.

Throughout the project, the applicant, neighbors, and open space advocates complimented Amy on her responsiveness and ability to understand a complex voter-initiative open space district. The planning department's administrative assistant found Amy particularly well organized and detail-oriented. As the planning director, I was pleased with how well Amy listened and responded to both sides of the proposed project. Her approach helped build credibility with the neighborhood and open space advocates. One particular benefit: members of the public realized that Town staff respected their viewpoints and properly applied the regulations of a voter-initiative open space district. Similarly, Amy built an effective working relationship with the developer/applicant to create a project that would be buildable.

I am looking forward to working with Amy again on other projects in Town.

Sincerely,

Shawna Brekke-Read
Planning Director