

September 28, 2004



Davis City Council
23 Russell Blvd
Davis, Ca 95616

C.C. AGENDA

DATE: 10-12-04

ITEM NO: 11A

Dear Council Members:

Almost a decade ago I worked with other community volunteers as a member of the Growth Management and Neighborhood Preservation Committee for the General Plan Update. Our committee was known for lively discussions, and my committee colleagues may recall that I was an outspoken supporter of Covell Center, as it was then known.

Since our committee was charged with considering both growth management and growth impacts on existing neighborhoods, a popular theme was to encourage "densification" of Central Davis; to grow "Up" - not "Out". Back then no one could have anticipated the rapid increase in demand for housing and hyperinflation in prices we have seen.

One effect of these forces has been a phenomenon that is bringing indelible adverse changes in established neighborhoods. We are now seeing conversion of single-family homes into "mini-dorms" that contain 8 or more bedrooms and as many as 14 residents and lots of cars.

The problem is citywide. These super-high density houses were never planned; they are simply a speculative response driven by limited supply of available housing. The city's ability to regulate and manage these mini-dorms is limited, and the trend will continue and likely worsen unless the city takes steps to reverse the problem.

A flyer left in my doorway recently urged me to "Save the Quality of Life in Davis" by opposing one of these high-density projects. I considered an 8-bedroom house down the street with 12 residents and 12 cars and a landlord living in the East Bay somewhere. How would it affect my family's quality of life? I weighed that against a planned community of a mix of housing types on the periphery of town that is sized over a decade. What would the resulting impact of that proposal be to our quality of life? I will take the planned community.

When Measure J was proposed it was represented as a method to remove politics from land planning decisions and to "Let the People Decide". I urge the city council to honor this promise and submit the Covell Village proposal to a vote of the people.

Sincerely,



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