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Collaborative

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San Rafael City Council
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Mayor Colin and City Council Members:

The Marin Environmental Housing Collaborative (MEHC) is a multi-disciplinary consortium of professionals generating support for projects and policies that advance affordable housing as well as environmental integrity and social justice.

MEHC urges you to grant a building permit fee waiver to Eden Housing for Vivalon's Healthy Aging Campus. This project has been many years in the making, with numerous delays to accommodate community concerns. During this time, construction and other costs have risen, jeopardizing the viability of the project. The City has already invested in this project, and should be committed to seeing it through to the end. The Vivalon Healthy Aging Campus is itself an investment in the citizens of San Rafael and we must do all we can to ensure that it is a success.

We find it ironic that the City is considering accepting an in-lieu fee in exchange for seven BMR units at the Merrydale project while considering denying a request from a respected affordable housing developer for monetary relief for a project that has considerable popular support. We do not recommend that the two agenda items be considered as an offset. Rather, in-lieu fees should be used exclusively to leverage funding for additional units that could not otherwise be achieved. Hence, we ask that you find other sources of funding to cover the fee waiver for the Vivalon Healthy Aging Center and preserve Affordable Housing Trust Fund fees for construction and acquisition of affordable units.

Please grant Eden Housing the requested fee waiver and help keep this project on track to begin construction in 2022.

Best regards,

Robert J. Pendoley
Board Chair