

**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Tuesday, September 14, 2021 3:34 PM

**To:** Distrib- City Clerk <City.Clerk@cityofsanrafael.org>; Leslie Mendez <Leslie.Mendez@cityofsanrafael.org>

**Subject:** PC & DRB 9/14/21 Meeting - For Public Comments

Commissioners and Board Members,

I'm totally in favor of mixed retail and residential at the Northgate Mall property.

However, given our dire drought situation and for years into the future according to climate scientists; I am NOT in favor of 900 rental units in Phase I. This simply doesn't make sense with current infrastructure.

Also, it's critical there be a combination of rental and ownership. Loads of studies show this creates a much healthier, stable and in the long run prosperous community. I am not in favor of segregating affordable, low-income, and senior units from market rate units. Again, studies show that even when units are built structurally the same that segregation leads to a class structure. Terra Linda has always been proud of the democratization that Joe Eichler started in the 1960's. Let's go backwards.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,

Adolfo Medved

35 year resident of Terra Linda

**From:** David Smith [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 14, 2021 3:39 PM  
**To:** Leslie Mendez <Leslie.Mendez@cityofsanrafael.org>  
**Cc:** Distrib- City Clerk <City.Clerk@cityofsanrafael.org>  
**Subject:** For the Joint Planning Commission and Design Review Board Study Session - 9/14/2021

Dear Leslie,

I am a member of Responsible Growth in Marin ("RGM") and would like to make the following comments as input into tonight's joint study session of the Planning Commission and the Design Review Board.

Dear Planning Commissioners and Design Review Board Members,

Merlone Geier ("MG")'s current plans for redevelopment of the Northgate Mall brings much needed housing and hopefully will transform the current mall into a vibrant, mixed use Town Center. RGM broadly supports this vision, but has suggestions to bring MG's proposal more into line with General Plan 2040 and in particular, to make the new development integrate better into the surrounding established neighborhood.

Although MG has revised its initial plans which featured five-story apartment blocks directly across the road from the single story Eichler houses, the revised plan still features three and four story buildings at the street edge of the southern end of the property along Northgate Drive (see MG's plan SD-18 and SD-19). General Plan 2040 requires that new developments "[p]reserve, enhance, and maintain the residential character of neighborhoods to keep them safe, desirable places to live", "[e]nhance neighborhood image and design quality" and most importantly "[i]ncorporate sensitive transitions in height and setbacks from adjacent properties". See GP 2040 at LU-3.2 (p. 3-34). Three and four story apartment buildings, literally just across the street from the historic (and protected) single story Eichlers on Nova Albion Way and Sao Augustine Way, would not meet those requirements.

Even the commercial buildings on Northgate Drive at the southern end of the mall are only two stories, and the Alma Via assisted living facility - the most recent building to be built on the southern section of Northgate Drive - is only two stories at street edge, rising to a maximum of three stories further back from the street. Moreover, those buildings are not adjacent to or across the street from the Eichlers, as MG's units would be.

As can be seen from MG's plans SD-18 and SD-19, the high density proposed housing units do not comply with GP 2040 and we ask that MG modify its plans to further step down the street edge housing units at the southern end to a maximum of two stories, with a more gentle increase in height back into the development. These changes would significantly help the new development sensitively transition into the existing neighborhood, as required by GP 2040.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

David Smith  
Responsible Growth in Marin

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*David B. Smith*



**From:** Grace G [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 14, 2021 3:10 PM  
**To:** Leslie Mendez <Leslie.Mendez@cityofsanrafael.org>; Distrib- City Clerk <City.Clerk@cityofsanrafael.org>  
**Subject:** 9/14/21 PC & DRB Meeting for PUBIC COMMENTS

Dear Commissioners and Board Members,

The current Merlone Geier Northgate proposed plan does not optimize connections to existing transit (bus and train) nor to the surrounding community.

It also doesn't include the completion of the North San Rafael Promenade as laid out in the Station Area Plan 2012 and included in GP2020/2040. The Promenade needs to fully circle the property, extend into the new Town Center and to the Civic Center area/SMART train station. This was the mission of the Merrydale Road Project which together with the City and the previous Northgate Mall property owner completed a significant portion of the Promenade; then, the project stalled when Merlone Geier bought the property.

It's vital for the safety of the community and accessibility to public transit that bus stops be consolidated and made safer along Las Gallinas Avenue. Thoughtful, beautiful, safe and ADA accessible pedestrian walkways and bike paths should be optimized to and around the Town Center.

These are important additions that should be included in Phase I to comply with the Station Area Plan 2012 and GP2040.

Thank you for your consideration on this matter and service to our community.

Sincerely,

Grace Geraghty

Responsible Growth in Marin (RGM)

**From:** Laurie Pirini [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 14, 2021 2:27 PM  
**To:** Distrib- City Clerk <City.Clerk@cityofsanrafael.org>; Leslie Mendez <Leslie.Mendez@cityofsanrafael.org>  
**Subject:** Water

East Bay & San Mateo counties don't have water restrictions yet.

I work in SSF. Lawns are as green as can be.

We stopped watering our lawn a year ago (hope to do pavers anyway), but for now it looks like crap.

My potted plants in my backyard are barely alive. I feel guilty watering them. 🙄

What's the deal? Why is the rest of the state not rationing like we are required to do?

Thank you for your time.

Laurie Pirini  
San Rafael resident

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Tuesday, September 14, 2021 1:42 PM

**To:** Distrib- City Clerk <City.Clerk@cityofsanrafael.org>; Leslie Mendez <Leslie.Mendez@cityofsanrafael.org>

**Subject:** Sept 14th Planning Commission Meeting re NorthGate Mall proposal for public comment

**a) Due to a lack of water in Marin has the Mayor and the City Council asked for a reprieve from the legislature and the Governor on mandated housing numbers as many other cities in CA have done? What was the result of such meetings? Are they communicating with the Planning Commission on this matter?**

**b) What is the Mayor's, the Council's and the Planning Commission's feelings about allowing further development in San Rafael when we do not have enough water the existing homes and businesses?**

**Patricia Warnock**

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Tuesday, September 14, 2021 2:19 PM

**To:** Distrib- City Clerk <City.Clerk@cityofsanrafael.org>; Leslie Mendez <Leslie.Mendez@cityofsanrafael.org>

**Subject:** Merlone Geier's Plan for Housing at Northgate Mall: Let's Avoid Separate But Equal (for meeting tonight 9/14/21)

Dear Commissioners and Members,

In its current plan for Northgate Mall, owner Merlone Geier is proposing a town square concept, including much needed housing and revitalized retail components. Responsible Growth in Marin ("RGM")'s membership broadly supports this redevelopment direction and we continue to press Merlone Geier for design improvements that will bring a revitalized Northgate Mall into line with San Rafael's General Plan 2040 and with North San Rafael's Vision efforts of the past 30 years (finishing the North San Rafael Promenade, increased green spaces, careful density and infrastructure planning and more).

As the Planning Commission and Design Review Board members consider the housing component of Merlone Geier's proposal, RGM believes it is important for affordable housing to be included throughout the development, not in a single or even a couple of separate buildings. Since the 1980s, there has been wide agreement amongst scholars and urban planners that everyone benefits from diverse, mixed neighborhoods (<https://inclusionaryhousing.org/inclusionary-housing-explained/what-problems-does-it-address/economic-integration/>). **RGM believes that affordable housing units should be developed across the entire community of residential buildings at Northgate to create a truly vibrant, inclusive neighborhood.** Separate but equal housing units shoved off to one side (same, size, quality, floorplan etc.) perpetuates economic and societal stigmas and will undermine the very considerable benefits that affordable housing at Northgate can and will impart. RGM supports construction that will include a number of affordable housing units in each residential building.

Thank you for your time and attention,

Susan Coleman

Member, Board of Directors

Responsible Growth in Marin ("RGM")

**From:** Kim Keith-Brown [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 14, 2021 11:19 AM  
**To:** John Burris [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** Leslie Mendez <[Leslie.Mendez@cityofsanrafael.org](mailto:Leslie.Mendez@cityofsanrafael.org)>; Lindsay Lara <[Lindsay.Lara@cityofsanrafael.org](mailto:Lindsay.Lara@cityofsanrafael.org)>  
**Subject:** Re: Some thoughts about

Thank you for your comment, John. Did you intend this as a PUBLIC COMMENT for tonight's SEPTEMBER 14 MEETING of the DRB and Planning Commission? Assuming you did, I wanted to flag that for Lindsay Lara and Leslie Mendez. Please let me know if that's correct, however.

Warm regards,  
Kim

On Fri, Sep 10, 2021 at 5:04 PM John Burris [REDACTED] wrote:  
Kim,

Some thoughts my neighbors in Terra Linda and I have been tossing about.

In spite of a major drought and an expected decrease in precip over the next centuries because of anthropologically driven climate change some folks are still looking to pack more people into Marin (and CA). Besides a lack of enough water in California to provide for the simultaneous needs of agriculture and urban areas another reason to **DECREASE** the population density in the Bay Area (and Southern CA) are earthquakes. There are two known, active, faults in the Bay Area, the Hayward fault and the San Andreas fault. Both are currently snoozing but not deceased. As long as the Pacific plate continues to grind away against the North American plate these faults will be active. When another quake of the magnitude (or greater) that hit SF in 1906 occurs what will happen to the folks displaced (killed) and the businesses and buildings destroyed? **Who will pay?** Certainly not the California Earthquake Authority that currently has a reported ~\$20 billion in assets - this is enough to probably cover San Rafael and adjacent communities but not the Bay Area or southern CA.

In 1960, a year I can remember, we had ~180 million people in the US; today its ~330 million. This is a whopping big increase in less than a lifetime. A blunt but politically incorrect assessment about the problems being experienced in CA are that they are either directly or indirectly being driven by too many folks.

John