



Michelle Mellon

Writer/Consultant

2416 Casa Way

Walnut Creek, CA 94597

January 14, 2004

Robert Henry, Director of Real Estate Development
Oakland Community Housing Incorporated
2030 Franklin St., 6th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612

Dear Mr. Henry,

It has come to my attention that OCHI has presented a proposal to the City of Walnut Creek to develop part of Casa Way into 10 housing units. Unfortunately, the residents of the street were not contacted nor notified of any specific intentions, and, as your organization would know had you canvassed the area, we are opposed to the development of that site.

We first voiced our opposition in a letter and signed petition to the City Planning Department, City Manager, and City Council last spring, following an article in the *Contra Costa Times* on February 13, 2003. We were informed in a response letter from the City that several sites were under consideration and that we would be kept informed of any progress. We have not received any further communication, but I do not intend to wait until plans are finalized behind our backs before again voicing strong opposition.

As a former consulting firm Project Manager for U.S. EPA programs on brownfields redevelopment, environmental justice, and smart growth issues, I am **appalled** that your organization is even considering the destruction of greenspace on a residential street in order to construct housing in a space that is inadequate to support the residential density and associated parking problems that will follow. The idea is the antithesis of sustainable urban planning, and will have a negative impact on both our quality of life and our property values.

My husband and I attended the Walnut Creek Citizens Institute last spring and were very impressed with the way our city is run and how it prioritizes what is in the best interests of its residents. Many of our neighbors are long-term residents; a few have lived here since the area was first developed in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Your proposal is in direct opposition to the ideals that have made these people happy to live the majority of their lives on Casa Way, and have made the rest of us proud and privileged to be a part of our community and our city.

None of the other potential development sites would alter the nature and quality of life of the surrounding areas like the proposed site on our street. I would suggest that you investigate these other options before you engage in an effort to cause irrevocable damage to Casa Way; our history, our character, and the quality of life so valued by all of our residents.

Sincerely,

Michelle Mellon

Cc: Sky Dufaux, Program Manager, OCHI
Dwight Dickerson, Executive Director, OCHI
Residents of Casa Way
Charlie Abrams, Mayor, City of Walnut Creek
Mike Parness, Manager, City of Walnut Creek
Valerie Barone, Community Development Director, City of Walnut Creek
Laura Simpson, Housing Program Manager, City of Walnut Creek