

Huntley, Robin@HCD

From: Huntley, Robin@HCD
Sent: Monday, August 05, 2013 3:30 PM
To: Campora, Glen@HCD; McDougall, Paul@HCD
Subject: Orinda

I spoke with Emmanuel Ursu, Planning Director for the city of Orinda, regarding their take on the letter HCD received from Orinda Watch.

Mr. Ursu felt that much of the group's motivation is to rally citizens to oppose Plan Bay Area. Many misunderstandings stem from the group not being involved in the process from the beginning of the housing element process (in 2009). The group believes the process has taken place behind closed doors. Mr. Ursu explained the City worked openly with the City Council for direction after receiving HCD's findings in 2009 and then proceeded to work with HCD toward compliance. The group feels the housing element document volunteers to do more than it needs to-exceeds statute. There is some philosophical differences and some paranoia. The group presented a detailed letter to the City outlining their concerns (approx. 15 pages). And the group has threatened litigation with the City.

The City Manager and Mr. Ursu will be meeting with the group later this week to try to explain the housing element process. I asked him to let me know how that goes.

The City will address the following at a City Council meeting on August 20:

- Ask for authorization to extend the contract with their consultant, Barry Miller
- Review their processes to demonstrate the draft housing element was not submitted without approval/direction from the City Council
- Explain that the housing element is a planning document and good planning is good for the City
- Discuss the possibility of retaining a consultant to prepare a more detailed CEQA document (regarding the rezone)

In addition, I was advised to expect a phone call from their consultant regarding some policies and action programs-see what they can revise and/or eliminate and still be considered in compliance with State housing law.

Mr. Ursu asked that I let him know how HCD intends to proceed regarding Orinda Watch's letter to HCD requesting a meeting.

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HCD has moved!
Our new address is:
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