J. Cyril Johnson Investment Corp.

November 26, 2019

Petaluma City Clerk
Claire Cooper, CMC
11 English Street
Petaluma, CA 94052

Re: Appeal to the Planning Commission-Sid Commons Apartment Project

The City of Petaluma Planning Department, and Planning Commission,

On November 19, 2019, the Sid Commons multifamily project came before the Petaluma Planning Commission. The applicant team requested adoption of the following three resolutions:

- Resolution recommending the City Council certify the Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR), adopt findings of fact, and adopt the mitigation monitoring and reporting program for the Sid Commons Apartment Project.
- Resolution recommending that the city Council adopt an ordinance amending the Zoning Map to rezone the northern portion of the Sid Commons Apartment site that is currently in the Oak Creek Apartments PUD (Planned Unit District) to R4.
- Resolution recommending the City Council approve clean up modifications to the Oak Creek Apartments PUD to reflect the Zoning Map Amendment and to reflect the existing Oak Creek Apartments.

Planning commission voted to recommend approval of the FEIR to City Council and voted to deny both the requested rezone of the northern portion of the Sid Commons site and the requested modifications to the Oak Creek Apartment PUD. Planning staff has communicated to us that this equates to a denial of the project.

We believe strongly that the Sid Commons housing project will ultimately have a very positive impact on the immediate neighborhood and the City of Petaluma. In conjunction with our appeal, the development team including the developer, architect, landscape architect and civil engineer have re-grouped, re-evaluated and re-thought the project. We have begun the process of significantly modifying the project based on feedback received from the Planning Commission and from the public and Petaluma City leadership. Considering this, we submit this letter as an appeal to the Planning Commission’s decision to deny the project on November 19, 2019. The remainder of this letter will outline the grounds for our appeal.
Appeal Grounds

Prior to and since the hearing, the applicant has made significant efforts to reach out to the public, local neighbors and Petaluma city leaders to gather feedback on how the project can provide much needed market-rate and affordable housing while carefully considering the projects impacts on the natural environment and the surrounding neighborhood. These efforts are outlined in the Public outreach memo submitted prior to the PC hearing.

In response to the feedback gathered and the responses from the members of the Planning commission on November 19, 2019, we have decided to significantly modify the project to respond to the information communicated in the public hearings and our local outreach.

Since the PC hearing this month, our development team gathered to discuss how we may be able to redesign the project to incorporate the recent feedback. We are in the process of carefully considering the following major modifications to the project:

- Reduced unit count below the current 205 units.
- Housing to be set-back a greater distance from river corridor and associated flood plain
- Increase number of three-story structures to decrease building footprint and provide more open space
- Maintain two-story structures adjacent to single family homes in adjacent neighborhood.
- Increased energy efficiency through the implementation of PV solar panels
- Larger green belt area leading from project site to the Petaluma River
- Evaluate saving additional existing trees outside the river corridor

We are assessing these additional modifications listed above considering the commitments we have already made to the city and public to provide the following:

- Traffic calming
- Public dog park
- Children’s public park
- River terracing
- 10% affordable onsite housing

We are optimistic that the City of Petaluma will continue to work with us to create a housing project that will provide a tremendous number of benefits to the local community, neighborhood, and City of Petaluma. We look forward to meeting with planning in December to discuss the modifications to the project.

Regards,

Gary and Mark Johnson