City Council Members:

Changing the zoning to accommodate the financial needs of the developer above the safety of residents would set a dangerous precedent.

Cyril “Sid” Johnson agreed not to develop parcel 9 in order to build the existing Oak Creek Apartments in 1982. The agreement came after the January 2, 1982 flood that inundated this entire area west of the Petaluma River from the Payran Street bridge to the RR tracks. Our neighborhood became a basin. The Sea Scouts rescued me from my home via canoe out the window. I have no pictures to share as escaping was first and foremost on my mind. The photos attached are from the 1986 flood.

From that point on, there were many sleepless/stressful nights every time there was heavy rain.

Property value fluctuated according to neighborhood flooding. This occurred for over 20 years. Many new homeowners in this neighborhood will be financially under water (no pun intended) if we are flooded again. The two-story homes in the area are the result of flooding, that’s how high the water was.

It has been a large relief that this has been remedied due to the Army Corps of Engineers flood project. It would be unacceptable to endure that quality of life again. In 2006, the flood wall came close to being breached.

The newly-proposed project consists of 180 units as opposed to 205 will still impose a significant impact. The existing Oak Creek Apartments total 76 units. A project of this size requires more than one in-and-out access. The at-grade crossing was rejected making this project even more dangerous. There is one parcel that is zoned for development. Paving over 15 acres is not feasible and again, dangerous for residents.

The traffic studies are flawed due to time of study. A study was conducted August in 2019, no school in session.

The additional vehicles, traffic, congestion, garbage pickup, fire, police and ambulance vehicles, damage to already pothole ridden Payran cannot be sustained using Graylawn as the only in-and-out access. A traffic “calming” at Jess will not mitigate the already congested W. Payran/Graylawn exit/entrance. Vehicles exiting or entering this neighborhood cannot easily and safely do so. West Payran is a thoroughfare and unsafe due to speeding and road conditions. Drivers actually attempt to pass residents trying exit or enter at this location.

Roger Huffman
Petaluma, CA 94952

Resident since 1981