

Published November 24th, 2021

Superior Court upholds city of Lafayette's approval of Terraces project

By Jennifer Wake



Terraces of Lafayette project site Image courtesy City of Lafayette

Save Lafayette, a preservationist grassroots group, filed its lawsuit against the city of Lafayette on Sept. 23, 2020 challenging the city's Aug. 25, 2020 approval of the Terraces, under the California Environmental Quality Act.

The Contra Costa Superior Court on Nov. 12 upheld the city of Lafayette's approval of the Terraces of Lafayette - a 315-apartment project on a 22-acre parcel at the southwest corner of Deer Hill Road and Pleasant Hill Road.

The lawsuit claimed that the project's approval based on an addendum to a 2013 environmental impact report was unlawful under CEQA, and that the project violates the city's general plan and zoning requirements.

In its ruling, after over a year of litigation, the Court rejected claims by Save Lafayette, and found that the city's environmental review complied with CEQA and that the Terraces project was consistent with the city's General Plan.

The 315-apartment project, in 14 two- and three-story residential buildings on a 22-acre parcel on Deer Hill Road, adjacent to the Highway 24 was first proposed in 2011. The application was suspended in 2014 in favor of alternative plans for a scaled back development of 44 single-family homes with a community park.

The city approved the alternative project in 2015. Save Lafayette initiated the referendum process to overturn that approval in 2018.

With the defeat of Measure L in 2018, the developer, O'Brien Land Company, resumed the original application for the 315-unit apartment project under the process agreement. The project includes 20% (63 units) offered as low-income housing.

The Court's ruling will become final unless Save Lafayette appeals within 60 days following the notice of entry of judgment.

For more information on the project, visit www.lovelafayette.org/Terraces

Reach the reporter at: jennifer@lamorindaweekly.com

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