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Published January 14th, 2015

Moraga Housing Element En Route for Certification

By Sophie Braccini

The Planning Commission unanimously approved the 2015-23 Housing Element that provides zoning for building at least 229 new housing units in Moraga. It complies with state requirements, as the document heavily relies on the Moraga Center Specific Plan (MCSP) that was approved four years ago.

The State Department of Housing and Community Development has already reviewed the first draft of this document. Recommended edits from HCD were incorporated, and the final version was approved by the Commission Jan. 5.

Failing to certify a Housing Element can have a financial impact for a town, but recent citizen movements have challenged the state mandate, calling it unrealistic and undemocratic. In Moraga, the approval of the MCSP allowed the town to get its Housing Element certified in 2011, and since the new mandate for additional housing is lower than the previous one, the town should not have any difficulty to be found compliant.

The Moraga Town Council will consider adoption of the Draft Housing Element on Jan. 28. Once adopted, the Town will submit the Housing Element to HCD for certification. HCD has 90 days to review the Adopted Housing Element for compliance with state law.

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