

**From:** [Gillian Fennessy](#)  
**To:** [Gillian Fennessy](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Responses on comments on Senior care Housing  
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**Attachments:** [Responses on comments on senior care housing.docx](#)

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**From:** I [herseld@aol.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 18, 2019 8:31 AM  
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Peter Imhof; Anne Wells; Lisa Prasse; Mary Chang; Michelle Greene; [kkimbell@aklaw.net](mailto:kkimbell@aklaw.net)  
**Subject:** Responses on comments on Senior care Housing

Good morning commissioners -

Attached, please find my responses to comments on Senior Care Housing.

Thank you,

Hersel Mikaelian

Dear Planning Commissioners:

In 1903 an American woman, Aide de Acosta, piloted an aircraft and became the first woman to fly. Amelia Earhart became the first woman to fly across the Atlantic. Most rockets are designed to burn up on reentry, Elon Musk's latest SpaceX rocket was designed to return to the launch pad without any damage. Previously it was said, "It's impossible".

The evening of Sept., 9th you took some positive actions in order to protect the legitimacy and forgotten cause called Senior Care housing. Since Goleta became incorporated, no one has cared or become concerned about senior care housing as much as you have. Consider yourself as one of these pioneers.

Some of you stepped out of your comfort zone, ignored unreasonable excuses and took charge just like the captain of the sea Sheppard to protect the life of elderly. There is an important word in the Hebrew language called "Mitzvah", *Good Deed*.

There were exhilarating moments when you stuck to your beliefs. You resisted every obstacle and barrier thrown at you. You were the defenders. (I regret I never took cheerleader classes). I feel I am no longer alone in this cause. Simply, thank you for being who you are and doing what you are doing.

#### **A Few Comments Made During the Hearing:**

1 - The size of the houses in Goleta are between 1400 to 1700 SQ.FT., and assertions about the number of the seniors to be allowed.

2 - Denying seniors to be cared for in residential zones and requiring CUP for senior care in residential zone.

**Responding to #1:** Please allow me to quote you what I wrote in my previous letter:

*"The Commission has a compelling opportunity to examine that fixed standard and either expand it or, more appropriately, consider a formula based on housing size. Nobody wants a dozen seniors living in a 1,800 SQ FT home, but similarly restricting the number to 6 in a 3,500 SQ FT home is equally problematic and unrealistic."*

*"Suppose, a house is 3500 SQ.FT. Doesn't it makes sense to have more seniors in the house when there is a shortage of senior housing? The current Zoning Code says it is ok to fit 6 seniors in a small, 1800 SQ. FT home .... but no more in a house twice as large? Wouldn't a far superior and equitable solution be to base the limits on the size of a dwelling unit, not a fixed number regardless of housing size?"*

*"3 - Alternative approach: Delete the limitation of 6 seniors per house. Instead provide 300 SQ. FT. per each senior (300 SQ. FT). (e.g.: A house with 3600 SQ. FT. is allowed to have 12 seniors. A 4200 SQ FT house can have 14 seniors."*

The fact is there are many houses in Goleta much larger than 1400 to 1700 SQ. FT. Just a block from my house there are house sizes as much as 3300 SQ.FT. on a 8000 SQ. Ft. lots. During my DRB hearings I learned there are houses in Goleta over 4400 SQ. FT. (e.g.: Crown Jewel Project, Kings Daniel Road 16 houses as large as 4400 SQ. FT, the Bluffs Project 64 houses as high as 4200 SQ. FT.

For example, my own housing project: While the exteriors of my proposed houses are perfectly designed as single family homes and supported by 99% of my neighbors (60 signed petitions), the interior floor areas are spacious enough to accommodate comfortably for many seniors. (This is possible due to existent lots size being 2 to 2 1/2 times larger than the neighborhood lots. This was as result of a request by environmentalist and County Supervisor Bill Wallace to cut down the density by half during the subdivision entitlement). Please let me know if you would like me to provide further documentation.

### **Responding to # 2:**

Earlier comments by commissioners (regarding child care) strongly suggested that "no children should have to live in industrial zones". I don't believe our seniors should be treated any differently. As seniors are old, just like children, they need to be cared for.

- A comment was made that if we want more than 6 seniors per house a CUP should be required. Does this means we are going to change the ordinances and ask for a household of more than 6 students or two families of 12 people to secure a CUP too? I strongly believe in "equal protection". Let us not forget there is no requirement for CUP in Supportive Housing in a single family house with absolutely no limitation of the numbers of seniors (there can be 16, 18, 20 people living in a house with no size limitation). Then why would someone suggest a requirement for a CUP, to make it more difficult to bring forth senior care projects? Single family homes already have enough restrictions. We want seniors to live in residential zones just like other age groups. This is not liquor store, porn shop or dispensaries. Please keep it simple so we can provide for senior care. This community or the world shouldn't be about you **or** others, we would be better off when it's about you **and** others.

### **Supportive Housing "Target Population"**

With respect to Supportive Housing, Staff prepared an ordinance for you to consider. You discovered that there is ambiguity in the State definition of "Target Population". As you recall, even the City Attorney couldn't figure out the language. (Staff did flag the subject ordinance). This ambiguity is precisely why no supportive housing operator is willing to provide senior care housing in Goleta. I have lost three operators.

**Important Note:** My proposed language does not attempt to alter or interpret the State definition of "Target Population." This would make my partners fearful about potential problem. Instead, it takes a safer approach by allowing "**market rate senior housing**" in addition to the State defined Target Population.

### **Regarding 6 seniors per one house.**

For a professional licensed operator this doesn't work either, it is economically infeasible. Every operator that I brought to provide Senior Care walked away. There has not been any incentive to provide senior care since the section code 35-292a.4 was replaced (14 seniors/ house, with no CUP). Furthermore, the General Plan is not helpful. The problem with the General Plan is that it does not provide the necessary flexibility to allow the zoning ordinances to be more specific and/or interpretation as needed. It is like a spider which is stuck in its own web.

Until you, nobody has been concerned enough to do anything proactively for our elderly. You may recall: Only one (1) senior care project has been approved since Goleta became incorporated (receiving approval in 2012 with construction completed in 2017). Mariposa is located on 2.9 acres and has 99 beds. So, the City of Goleta only approved senior care housing for 0.24% their own population.

In comparison the land that I am providing for senior care is 4.5 acres and is fully entitled. All the infrastructure is in place, this includes all the utilities and water rights and allocation going back to 1984. Everything is perfectly ready to provide for elderly care housing. My neighbors endorse senior care housing. Your support to correct the zoning ordinance is necessary to allow this to happen. I have worked hard for 43 years to get this site ready for senior care housing. I am not a developer. I am just working to create this one senior care project.

Zoning Ordinances must be economically feasible. Just a month ago two operators of senior care projects met with staff members, Mary Chang and Lisa Prasse. It became apparent to the staff that the operators could not provide senior care under: 1 - Supportive Housing if the "Target population" just represented low income households and not market rate households. 2 - Only 6 seniors/ house. However, further discussion revealed senior care was possible if market rate was allowed in addition to "Target population" and under senior care housing allowed 14 seniors with no CUP as per the previous zoning ordinance 35-292.4a.

State Law does not say that 6 seniors/house is a maximum. After talking to Greg Necless at HCD I was told that "there is no limit as to how many seniors can live in a residential zones".

When I was in engineering school my professor of design gave us great advice. "A good design includes a minimum of components." Now that I am trying to provide elderly care I am confronted and blocked by a maze of convoluted policies.

Something to think about: There are two kind of people on earth, first: the problem makers and second: the problem solvers.

Once more thank you for the vision and leadership you expressed in the last Planning Commission hearing.

Hersel Mikaelian