

# Attachment 2

**From:** Ed Keegan [mailto:EdKeegan@kconstructionservices.com]  
**Sent:** Tue 9/1/2009 4:36 PM  
**To:** Janet Kennedy  
**Subject:** Please support RCD's Senior Housing Project



Dear Ms. Kennedy-

I am writing in support of the proposed Berrellesa Palms Senior Housing project proposed for downtown Martinez by Resources for Community Development (RCD). I have attended every planning and commission meeting on this project since early February, and have listened to the vociferous and often mis-informed fearful arguments of the neighbors against this project and its developer. I feel very strongly that this is our best, and perhaps last shot for a long time at creating a new dynamic for economic development and vitality in downtown Martinez.

The days of easy development and market rate single family housing that financing and practical developers will pursue, and that will lift the neighboring home values will not be seen anytime soon in our downtown. Financially speaking, short of a redevelopment Agency taking the lead, I do not see any bank or developer taking the substantial risk that a new project in our city- with a history of contentious neighbors and underperforming economics- without huge incentives to make a simple pro forma pencil out.

This project is an opportunity to jump start revitalization. It will be an anchor that other projects can build around. It will update a dilapidated area, bringing in people, activity, and potential that others can build on in the neighboring blighted commercial properties, while at the same time filling a critical need for senior housing that our community has underserved.

I believe the City staff has done an outstanding job of identifying and addressing the contentious issues on this project including conformance with the Downtown Specific Plan, CEQA approval process, and in assessing the impact to the community. It is the most complicated resolution I have seen in my years of following project approval- and it may be intimidating to the Council to take on this complicated project. But anything worthwhile in our new economic reality will take a huge effort. I hope you and the rest of the Council are up to the task.

While I share the concern over the impact of a new project on a limited number of neighbors, the reality is that this is the downtown area of a city - and that if we are going to have reasonable density, some larger buildings capable of supporting a downtown business district, this is where it needs to happen. Business owners spoke in large numbers at the Planning Commission hearing in support of this project.

Neighborhoods change, its part of life. Certainly my own neighborhood- with the street that bears formner mayor Menesini's name across from my house- is a

testament to that reality. And it all works out just fine in the end....new neighbors, evolved neighborhoods.

We are fortunate in that RCD is an outstanding developer of non-profit housing. In my career, I have been retained by CHFA ( Calif. Housing Finance Agency) as an inspector on projects run by RCD- and have uniformly found them to be of high quality, well constructed, with professional staff to manage them to ensure that the kind of issues plaguing some of the other housing projects in Martinez will not happen here. They are committed to affordable housing, have a dedicated staff, and have agreed to all the stipulations to be recorded with the project title needed to ensure this project stays affordable, non-section 8, for the next 50 years.

I will unfortunately be out of town on September 9th. I know what the meeting will be like, and hope that you and the Council will see the opportunity before you, and the potential that may not pass this way again anytime soon, and stand up to the pressure of the immediate neighbors and out of town landlords to approve this project.

Please support the RCD Berrellesa Palms project!

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