verde
a sustainability consulting firm

January 16, 2014

Mayor Righeimer and Members of the City Council
Chairman Fitzpatrick and Members of the Planning Commission
City of Costa Mesa
77 Fair Drive
Costa Mesa, CA 92628

Re: Lighthouse Project

Mayor, Chairman and Members of the City Council and Planning Commission:

verde is working with the property owner to assist them in aligning the Lighthouse project, located at 1620 Whittier Avenue in Costa Mesa, California, with recognized strategies and opportunities for sustainable community developments.

Sustainable communities and green homes are important because they offer the opportunity to response to the most important challenges of our time, including global climate change, dependence on unsustainable development and expensive sources of energy and water, and threats to human health.

While more elements are anticipated to be developed as the design progresses and becomes more specific, the following outlines some of the existing and anticipated sustainable features currently included in the Lighthouse project:

- The project is located on an infill property that was previously developed therefore is within and near existing communities and public transit infrastructure. Improvement and redevelopment within existing developed areas reduces impacts on resources and public services. Currently the area has a Walk Score of 65, which is considered 'somewhat walkable', but partnered within a ½ mile proximity to the Placentia/16th OCTA Route 47/47A bus stop it creates a genuine opportunity for residents to reduce vehicle miles traveled through existing components of the neighboring areas.

- Building compactly can reduce up-front costs of infrastructure both for the building and for the public. It makes more efficient use of infrastructure such as water and sewer pipelines, gas pipelines, electrical cables and telecommunication lines and can increase available areas for parks and open spaces. With a density of 15.6 units per acre and a total of 62,352 s.f. of open space provided, the project efficiently utilizes the available land area. A minimum density required in the LEED-ND Neighborhood Pattern Design is seven dwelling units per acre and this has provided over two times that density.

8 corporate park, suite 130. irvine, California 92606 p)949.683.4645

- The project provides a variety of sizes and efficiency between loft, standard residential, and live/work options which open it up to a diverse group of home-owners. The size of the homes are such that they provide effective living and working space without exceeding, and in some cases lower than, the "neutral home size" as defined by U.S. Green Building Council. It is estimated that the relationship between home size and annual energy usage as well as materials usage is such that, as a home size doubles, energy consumption increases by roughly one-quarter, and material consumption increases by nearly one-half, therefore efficient use of resources are integrated into the plans. The incorporation of live/work residences not only provides the opportunity for future commercial uses within the new neighborhood but also the residents of live/work units tend to eliminate or dramatically reduce the daily employment commute of the occupants, so overall vehicle dependent uses are reduced.

- The overall layout of the Lighthouse project encourages social interaction and active recreation through the passive features that slow automobiles and the provided public spaces, with connected, walkable access. The detached homes with large window and integration patio areas transform streetscapes into public amenities.

- Green homebuilding strategies and techniques are most effectively implemented with integrated input from individuals with successful experience in sustainable project design and development. By engaging a LEED® for Homes professionally credentialed consultant, the first step has been taken in assuring the project maximizes green strategies.

Sincerely,

Robyn Vettraino, President

LEED AP HOMES

LEED AP BD+C

USGBC orange county BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Warrants for 1-21-14

1/3/14	Prosurface	10334	$9,684.00	**What is this for?** Remove, furnish & install. Resurfacing and restriping of concrete sports courts at Wakeham Park; including extensive preparation and crack repair.
1/10/14	Beyond the Office Door LLC	22210	$9,982.82	**How many of each and where?** Neighborhood Community Center 4 reception chairs 3 receptions sofas 2 chairs 3 coffee tables 6 end tables
1/10/14	Endemic Environmental Services Inc.	21277	$14,350.00	**What is this for?** Endemic Environmental Services - $13,500- for Annual biological monitoring report for Phase I Wetlands, year 4. $850 for burrowing owl survey. See attachments (now on website).
1/10/14	Scientific Resource Surveys	22139	$9,909.50	**Is report finished?** Fairview Park Scientific Resource Services: This is a progress payment for work on the Phase 1 Survey and report. The report is anticipated to be submitted to the City by the end of the month.
1/10/14	Orangewood Childrens Foundations	9554	$470.00	**What is this for?** Refund – The Orangewood Children's Foundation refund of $470.00 was for the security and damage deposit for a recent event at NCC.

Endemic Environmental Services, Inc.

Attn:
Bart Mejia
City Engineer
City of Costa Mesa

Subject: Burrowing Owl Presence/Absence Survey

As requested by the City of Costa Mesa, Endemic Environmental Services Inc. (Endemic) performed a two-day survey to determine the presence or absence of burrowing owls (*Athene cunicularia*) at Fairview Park, east of Placentia Avenue. The following report summarizes the results of the burrowing owl survey conducted.

Introduction

Burrowing owls are a California Special Concern species and have been previously known to use this site for nesting and overwintering. Therefore, it was necessary to survey the site prior to mowing as to minimize disturbance to any burrowing owl individuals using the site. Additionally, burrowing owls are known to use burrows that have been abandoned by ground squirrels. This site does support a large population of California ground squirrels (*Otospermophilus beecheyi*), providing suitable burrow habitat for burrowing owls to use.

Methodology

Two qualified biologist performed U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service protocol presence absence field surveys from December 11, 2013 to December 12, 2013 in the area depicted in the map. The area was surveyed using pedestrian belt transects spaced 10 meters apart to achieve 100 percent visual coverage, as per the USFWS survey protocol. Visual-encounter searches were used to detect and identify burrowing owl sign and any observed signs were recorded. All potential burrowing owl sign including active burrows, scat, or tracks were examined and recorded according to the survey protocol. Only definitive burrowing owl sign was reported.

Results

After completing these surveys, Endemic's biologists determined that no burrowing owls are currently present within the survey area. The City of Costa Mesa will not be disturbing any burrowing owl individuals by mowing activities. After conducting the presence absence surveys, no signs of individuals residing on or using the site were found. The map attached at the end of this report depicts the area of surveyed using belt transects for your reference.

Discussion

While no individuals were found to be currently using the site, the burrowing owls could still potentially move over to use the site from surrounding areas in the future. Care should be taken while working on or mowing the site, as new individuals could begin to use the site at any time. Particular care should be taken when mowing around burrows and areas disturbed by ground squirrels, as these are the areas that burrowing owls would be most likely to use. If any individuals are found in the future, the city should contact Endemic immediately for further information on how to avoid any disturbance and remain in compliance with all regulations specific to burrowing owls.

Respectfully submitted,

Barry Nerhus, Jr.
President/Restoration Ecologist
Endemic Environmental Services, Inc.
bnerhus@endemicenvironmental.net
Office: (714) 842-4328

17202 Gothard St Unit 9
Huntington Beach, CA 92647


Placentia Ave
Project: Burrowing Owl Survey
Date: December 18, 2013
Source: ESRI, Endemic,DigitalGlobe
Projection: Mercator_Auxiliary_Sphere
Created by: Endemic/EMS
Area Surveyed