



April 20, 2011

Steve Banks, Senior Planner
Community Planning Department, City of Folsom
50 Natoma Street
Folsom, CA 95630

RE: Support for Leidesdorff Village

Dear Mr. Banks:

WALKSacramento is pleased to support Leidesdorff Village. The project includes Folsom EcoHousing (Phase I) and Sibley Corner (Phase II). This is an exciting project that we believe offers important community walkability benefits.

Walkability benefits -- Leidesdorff Village will encourage residents to walk by its location very near to the Folsom Light Rail Station, to Folsom downtown commercial uses and offices, and to the nearby park. The project will add potential customers to the downtown area and to potential commercial establishments envisioned to be built as part of Leidesdorff Village Phase II.

Less traffic and parking needed than equivalent units -- The residents of the new units will add motor vehicle traffic. However, studies indicate that cohousing projects tend to have less traffic generated than equivalent housing developments (as much as 25% less). This is because of the increased sharing of resources. Many trips are shared, and trips that individual households might take may be avoided by the sharing of gardening, meal preparation, and other maintenance responsibilities. For this reason, we support the project's reduction in overall parking recommended for both phases of the project.

Opportunities for seniors -- The Cohousing project offers senior empty nesters in Folsom, who may be interested in smaller yards, the opportunity to stay in their neighborhood. Cohousing projects are particularly valuable for seniors, as they offer neighborhood cohesiveness and support. This project in particular offers seniors the opportunity to walk to nearby destinations. Research shows that continued walking not only maintains health as we get older, but the exercise, in fact, makes it possible to continue to drive.

Smart Growth -- Cohousing projects such as this one that are created by community members are ideal for infill development. They include people who already live in the community as well as others who live in nearby Sacramento communities -- people that have

a commitment to a sustainable lifestyle. They have come together to create an environmentally and family friendly community. Leidesdorff Village will be a real asset for the community and a model for future infill projects.

Recommendations – While we fully support this project, we have a few minor suggestions to enhance its walkability and bikability.

1. Trees: We note that the sidewalk envisioned along Leidesdorff is planned to be 7' wide which is good. However, at this time, no trees are indicated. We also note that the width of this section of roadway is limited. We recommend that the developer include planter areas in the parking strip for shade trees. This will enhance the walkability on hot summer days.
2. Park access: We note that this project is directly adjacent to the Preserve Mini-park. We recommend that a gate be provided for residents of Leidesdorff Village to allow access to the park. This will be valuable both for the children of Leidesdorff Village and the adults and seniors.
3. Pathways to Joss House historical gazebo: The gazebo proposed to be built in memory of the Chinese Joss House that was located on the site is a valuable place-making resource. It will have an access from Leidesdorff Street up a staircase connected to the project. We suggest that an additional pathway be created from the mini-park that could be accessed on special occasions.
4. Chinese Bricks along Sutter Street: The project developer proposes to highlight these historic bricks. We suggest that in addition to a special marker that there might be a space for a bench for persons walking in the vicinity.

We strongly urge your support and approval of Leidesdorff Village Phase I: Folsom EcoHousing. If you have questions or need additional information, please contact me at (916) 446-9255 or via email at tduarte@walksacramento.org or Anne Geraghty at ageraghty@comcast.net.

Sincerely,



Teri Duarte, MPH
Executive Director

Cc: Marty Maskall, Leidesdorff Village project manager
Tony Powers, Folsom Area Bicycle Advocates
Tricia Hedahl, Sacramento Area Bicycle Advocates
Larry Robinson, Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District
Argelia Leon, Breathe California of Sacramento Emigrant Trails
Rebecca Garrison, Highway 50 Corridor Transportation Management Association