

March 3, 2009

Mr. Dan Leavitt, Deputy Director
California High-Speed Rail Authority
925 L Street, Suite 1425
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. Leavitt:

We have been invited, as Atherton homeowners along the current Cal Train corridor, to dimensionalize the impact of the High-Speed Rail project on our property and family life.

There are three things we wish to state up front are of utmost importance to us:

- 1.) A clear process and timeline for the project as it nears and begins to affect the ability to occupy our home reasonably and safely. We are a family of six, with four children.
- 2.) A clear process to arrive at: (a) a fair assessment of the financial impact of this project on our property value, and (b) a fair remuneration from the state of California.
- 3.) A design plan that includes tunneling the train through our beautiful and historically rural town of Atherton and our neighborhood. Any other alternative is unimaginable and untenable.

The following includes the hard and soft impacts of this project on our property and home at 30 McCormick Lane:

- 1.) Within 10-12 feet of our corridor property line and fence, there are **(53) fully mature California Redwood trees and (8) healthy saplings.**

These trees are part of a "hedge" of 125 fully mature redwood trees that surround our property, following the property line.

In addition to the beauty and environmental benefit of these trees, they have provided an important visual barrier and sense of privacy between our home and Cal Train. Especially as many of these trains now include an upper deck which would give passengers direct sight lines into our backyard and house if removed.

These trees also provide an extremely important visual barrier to the lights that have been installed in the parking lot and along the train tracks. These shine all night and are ugly.

Finally, whether psychological or actual, these trees seem to decrease the sound impact of living along the corridor.

Removing these trees will substantially decrease the aesthetic appeal and value of our property.

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2.) Within 20 feet of our corridor property line and fence, there are **an additional (8) fully mature California Redwoods, (25) 10-30 foot bushes, and (6) Japanese maple trees** that have been planted as additional visual and sound barriers as well as for beauty.

3.) Within 18-20 feet of our corridor property line and fence there are **two substantial buildings of approximately 2150 square feet combined which represents 35% of the total square footage on our property:**

a.) a 150 square foot Pool House with water, sewer, electrical, phone, and gas pipes and lines.

b.) a 2000 square foot Garage and Home Offices building with water, sewer, phone, and electrical pipes and lines.

Together, these buildings represent 35% of the total occupiable square footage on our property. Removing and/or negatively affecting these buildings would substantially decrease the value of our property.

4.) Within 30 feet of our property line and fence there is a **patio and large in-ground swimming pool and hot tub, and an additional (10) fully mature California Redwood trees.**

5.) Within all the above mentioned spaces, there are irrigation, water, sewer, electrical, and gas pipes, lines, and infrastructures. Any changes to these would affect the main house as well.

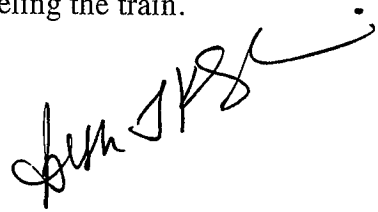
6.) We had been pursuing estimates for solar panel installation in 2009. This will be put on hold due to the uncertainties presented by this project.

7.) Lastly, we live in a great neighborhood along McCormick Lane and the Cal Train Corridor. It is one where doors have been cut into fences so children can easily run back and forth and play with one another. It is home to a community that gathers for birthdays, holidays, inaugurations, and just for the fun of it. We have developed traditions at Halloween, which always includes visiting our town hero, Mr. Willie Mays; and we have paraded with decorated bicycles to the summer town picnic at Holbrook Palmer Park, both Mr. Mays and the park are along the corridor. And it is one that shares one another's burdens and even toilets and showers when a water or sewer system fails.

There is no doubt that the High-Speed Rail project will have a negative impact on our property and on the town center of Atherton. The question now is how to minimize these negative impacts and we suggest this would include working fairly and effectively with the homeowners along the way, the town council of Atherton, and tunneling the train.

Thank you for your consideration,

Beth, Guy, Nic, Noah, Nohemi, and Nathan Kawasaki



cc: Jerry Carlson, Atherton Mayor ✓

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