

March 6, 2020

Planning Commission  
City of Menlo Park  
701 Laurel Street  
Menlo Park, CA 94025

**Project Description Letter  
Preliminary Application  
Greystar Menlo Flats – 165 Jefferson Drive**

Dear Menlo Park Planning Commission:

We are excited to present to you this proposal that would deliver 158 new housing units to the Bayfront Area. We had recently completed the 146-unit multifamily apartment project at 3645 Haven Avenue, and we look forward to working with you once again to help alleviate the housing and traffic crises in the area.

The proposed project, named “Menlo Flats,” is located in the M-2 Area of Menlo Park, north of Highway US 101 and east of Marsh Road. The project site is a 1.38-acre single parcel located at 165 Jefferson Drive in the R-MU-B zoning district within the ConnectMenlo General Plan. The project site currently contains a single-story office building approximately 24,300 square feet in size that would be demolished as part of the redevelopment.

The project proposes to construct a new midrise residential building with 158 dwelling units. The project will include 21 residential units to be affordable, and proposes to utilize the City’s Below Market Rate Housing Program, which allows the project one additional unit for each BMR onsite unit and allows for increases in floor area by an amount that corresponds to the increase in allowable density. The building would incorporate three-levels of above-grade podium garage with five-levels of residential units above, and would include residential amenities, roof deck, and an outdoor courtyard on the podium level. Additionally, the project proposal incorporates the portion of the pedestrian paseo located on the project site, per the ConnectMenlo Plan, and a publicly accessible outdoor landscaped plaza with seating and site furnishings. Finally, the project proposes 14,400 square feet of commercial space along the street-facing frontage of Jefferson Drive at the base of the building.

Our team has taken advantage of the continued feedback received from Planning Commission and Staff on our Menlo Uptown and Menlo Portal projects, both of which are located within the same zoning district. In particular, we have considered massing, publicly accessible open space, and planning for a community amenity. We have preliminarily identified the street-facing commercial space as a placeholder location to potentially contain the community benefit. A particular use of this space has not yet been identified but could include retail, an eating establishment, personal services, private recreation, and/or other commercial uses permitted in the R-MU-B zoning district. We intend to work closely with the City and Menlo Park residents to determine both the character of this space and the ultimate community benefit.

We understand that new construction projects of this size are subject to architectural control review, and as a result the proposal as presented includes only preliminary design direction. We plan to work with Staff and Planning Commission

to further refine the design of this project. Additionally, we intend to engage the community and our future neighbors in order to thoughtfully gather, consider, and incorporate feedback.

We anticipate that the project will ultimately require:

- Environmental review to analyze potential environmental and traffic impacts of the project
- Use permit for bonus level development
- Architectural control to review the future design of the project and site improvements
- Below Market Rate (BMR) housing agreement to provide on-site BMR units, as well as the density bonus per BMR Housing Program
- Zoning ordinance waivers for density, average height, residential gross floor area, open space, and parking to accommodate the 20 BMR density bonus units

The project was originally submitted on December 18, 2019 for Planning Committee Study Session. We request closing that Study Session case (PRE2019-00001), and formally submit this official Preliminary Application for this project.

We believe that the region is in great need of more housing, especially as regional employers continue to grow rapidly. A jobs/housing imbalance has existed in recent years and is expected to continue into the future, causing further strain on housing availability, increased rents, and traffic. We look forward to working with Planning Commission to deliver this new proposed housing project to Menlo Park.

Sincerely,

Andrew Morcos  
Senior Development Director  
Greystar