

Lisa Driscoll

From: cubanelsa@sbcglobal.net
Sent: Wednesday, August 25, 2021 7:52 AM
To: Lisa Driscoll
Cc: David Sharples; ACCE's Edith Pastrano; John_Gioia
Subject: Recommendations to BOS

Dear Measure X Advisory Board Members,

I'M 67 years old and an elder in this community. My husband and I have bought and sold a couple of houses and in later years we downsized to apartments. We would have liked to find a nice place to permanently live but the trend was that it would get sold out from under us to the highest bidder.

Where we live now, we waited a full year to get into this senior complex administered by a corporate landlord. One year they decided to raise rent 12% and seniors here are on a fixed income. When the news went national about a local Contra Costa corporate landlord raising rents to seniors, it embarrassed them into doing the right thing. The housing crisis is affecting seniors like me.

The City of Richmond and Contra Costa County has many empty lots and boarded up buildings. Hopefully, with the County's help they become sites for the Community Land Trusts. Why? Because as seniors and when we begin to age, what we want is the peace of mind that is gained only through permanency in a community for a very long time!

I think providing housing to seniors would be more stable through a community land trust. I live in a complex of 192 units and it has changed hands a couple of times. It started out so nice. They used to have a van that took people to doctors and shopping. I participated in dance and art classes. Our events had the best BBQ ever and huge themes for 4th of July and Christmas was off the hook. People that put "affordable housing" together, if they cannot raise the rent "enough" then they extract value to keep up the profit margins. They do this by taking away amenities. A Land Trust has no profit motive and it keeps affordability beyond what (so called) nonprofit builders do. Because the idea of the land trust is new, this committee must prioritize investing in a housing trust fund to support in preservation and to allow the Community Land Trust to access funds to finance CLT owned homes for many many generations to come.

Today I am speaking on my support for a housing trust fund as a flexible tool for funding housing investments and I strongly urge you to adapt & expand the County Housing Trust Fund request to meet the preservation and production priorities, in particular require that half of the funds the County receives for the housing trust fund be used on preservation and anti-displacement (not just the development of new housing units).

I trust that you will take our recommendations seriously because most of the members of this Measure X Committee are Service Providers of one sort or another. You know, being in the trenches what a difference having a stable roof over your clients' heads would make. From all our lips to God's ears. It will probably take an act from God for the County Board to address housing appropriately.

Sincerely,
Mrs. Elsa Stevens
Contra Costa Voter