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Architects & Planners
Inc., AIA/NCARB

September 3, 2025

Community Development Department Planning Division
1600 1st St., Napa 94559
Re-PL24-0059 Wilkens Townhome proposal

To: Planning Commission Chairman, Planning Commissioners and staff

I have reviewed this project proposal and while I support the higher density and the approval of the Tentative Map, I believe the design is incomplete, inappropriate and should not be approved. Both the floor plans and the exterior elevations do not meet Napa City Design Standards. They are of extremely poor quality, not fit for this site. While discretionary denial of projects by California cities may have limitations, State law does not preclude requiring a project to meet minimum reasonable standards. Nor does the State limit any city review for basic living standards or neighborhood compatibility.

The previously approved 10 unit project has been resurrected to create 11 units by subdividing one unit into two. The design is terrible and will be a disaster for the developer. I highlight below four unresolved issues:

- 1) The poorly designed unit ground floor plans with one car garage, an old-fashioned kitchen, no dining room and a large living room with a useless corner fireplace can be improved. It's not marketable, let alone worth building.
- 2) The second floor has serious flaws with two rear bedrooms, less than 8 feet wide. Three bedrooms is a challenge but can be achieved in a better layout.
- 3) The four exterior elevations are without any character and lack reasonable design. With three different materials on the exterior, no roof plan attached, the roof shapes and designs could be far better designed in representing this neighborhood.
- 4) In reviewing the site plan, I note there is only 40 feet of back up distance at four of the units with garages. 44 feet has been the standard minimum requirement of the city and why they should be allowed to a lower standard is inappropriate.

It is my opinion that the exterior elevations and plans are incomplete and should not be approved as-is under any circumstances. There is no roof plan, no material palettes, no landscape plan, no proposed colors or any of the other important elements that the Planning Commission is required to review for any approval. My recommendation to the board is to approve the Tentative Map with the present layout but requires the developer to reconsider the floorplans and elevations in order to create a more desirable design. This can be a simple condition just like all the public works requirements listed. This does not have to be expensive but will only improve the quality and marketing of the project.

Most Sincerely,

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