

November 12, 2021
Via e-mail

Adrian Veliz, Planner
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Contra Costa County
Department of Conservation and Development
Community Development Division
30 Muir Road
Martinez, CA 94553

Subject: #CDLP21-02046, Application for 120,215 square foot warehouse project at 411 Brookside Drive by Panattoni Development Company

Dear Adrian Veliz:

This letter expresses Urban Tilth's opposition to the proposed project, which we understand consists of a warehouse building with associated parking to be located on the property adjoining our North Richmond Farm on the east. The reasons for our opposition are manyfold, and are summarized below.

We learned about this project during the most recent meeting of the North Richmond Municipal Advisory Council. During the meeting, there were various public comments made in opposition of the project.

Our concerns include:

- The proposed project is adjacent to a community farm where thousands of pounds of healthy food is currently grown for the most vulnerable members of the community.
- The proposed 40 ft tall building, despite being located 40 ft back from the property line, will cast a deep shadow on the farm for a significant portion of the daylight hours, dramatically impacting the farm's yield and reducing its capacity to feed and employ vulnerable residents. The attached preliminary shade study [completed by our architect Noll & Tam](#) shows the impact of the proposed building's shading; the proposed building blocks our crops from 3 to 4 hours of sunlight per day, depending on the season. These impacts are especially critical during the winter months when the number of sunlight hours is already reduced due to the season.

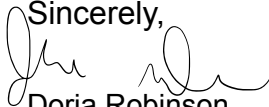
- The proposed project will destroy the historic greenhouses on site, which are well over 50 years old, and the valuable cultural history of the Japanese families who led in the flower industry during the last century.
- The project will disturb Native American archaeological sites that are likely present on the site. (The area is known to contain several archaeological sites, and one that is on our adjoining property very likely extends onto the 411 Brookside property as well.) Please refer to the attached letter from our project archaeologist for further explanation.
- North Richmond is over capacity and over-filled with constructed and planned warehouses.
- 150 parking spaces to be constructed that will create more truck inflow to and from the community and create additional traffic, safety and health concerns which is especially troubling for the community farm and Verde Elementary whose students already have disproportionately high rates of asthma.
- The proposed project's western driveway will result in traffic conflicts due to its close proximity to the North Richmond Farm driveway on Brookside Drive.
- *Urban Tilth has spent over 7 years working with the County to develop the North Richmond Farm project to create an access point for healthy food as well as living wage jobs and training programs for youth and local residents. **This proposed project will undermine this critical, community resilience building work and waste the millions dollars invested by Contra Costa County and other philanthropic partners in this project.***

The developer of this project is proposing to demolish all existing structures to build a speculative distribution or manufacturing facility on the land. They dangle the carrot of the potential for jobs, but historically new jobs in these developments do not go to the local residents that need them the most but rather to those who will commute to North Richmond, bringing their car exhaust and leaving little other positive value for struggling local residents.

We believe this proposed development will harm the local community, destroying some of the last remaining pieces of history and destroying our plans for growing much needed healthy foods and creating jobs that will *actually* go to local residents. **We urge you to NOT RECOMMEND this development project in your staff report.**

We know our opinions are shared by many who have not managed to attend meetings or write letters and emails.

Thank you for your continued service and support of our communities.

Sincerely,

 Doria Robinson
 Executive Director

Att: Shade Impact Study by Noll & Tam
Archaeological/Historical Consultants letter dated 11/12/21

cc: Contra Costa Planning [planninghearing@dcd.cccounty.us]
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