



Dear Editor:

1000 Friends Protecting Historic Benicia is writing to respond to a letter to the editor about our March 12 forum on the historic Arsenal and the City of Benicia-approved housing projects there ("Reporting seems to be lost," March 31).

Anyone who cares about public health, safety, and Benicia's heritage should be concerned about the City's recent approval of a large new residential neighborhood in the heart of the nationally recognized Arsenal historic district. A total of 138 housing units will sit on the open spaces of Jefferson Ridge, right next to Valero fuel pipelines and Port of Benicia operations. Massive new structures will dwarf the historic Officers' Row buildings, blocking sight lines between buildings and other important views that were planned by the U.S. Army in a strategic site design that dates back to the Civil War era.

The important sight lines between buildings in the historic district are well documented in City of Benicia studies and plans for the Arsenal. A graphic provided at the forum showing the overwhelming impact of the new housing was prepared using the approved project plans along with computer-aided design (CAD), a standard technique used in the architecture industry for showing building height and massing.

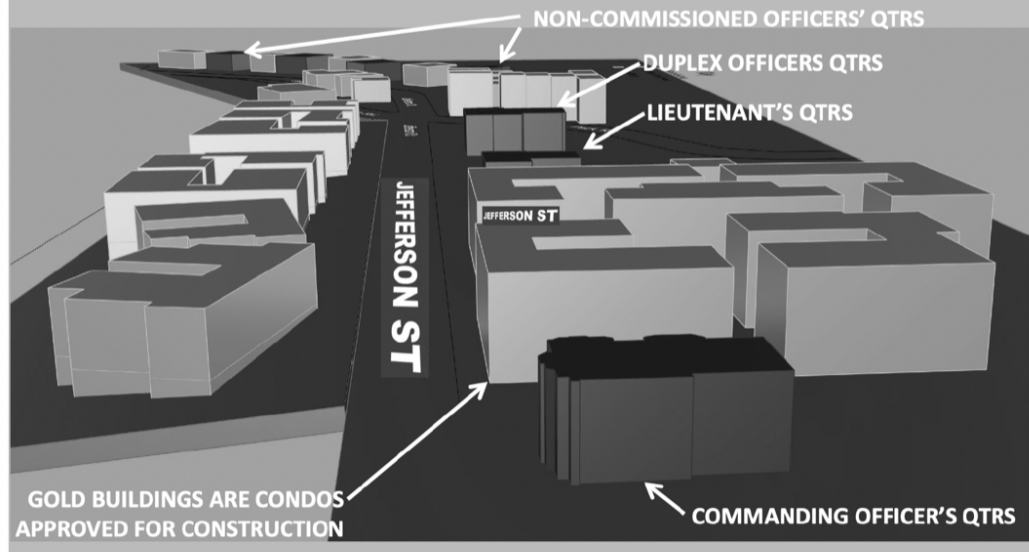
City of Benicia staff improperly approved the Arsenal housing projects and denied community members the right to appeal the approvals to the City Council, making a lawsuit the only recourse. Throughout the process, the City ignored extensive community input as well as a petition signed by more than 1,600 people asking the City to deny the housing projects due to their impacts on the historic district.

1000 Friends Protecting Historic Benicia, a non-profit incorporated in 2023 to help preserve Benicia's cultural heritage, has filed a lawsuit. A well-known and highly respected public interest law firm is representing us in court. Real estate developers will defend the City of Benicia, as required by the City's conditions of approval for the housing projects. Our cause will rely on contributions from the community. Anyone interested in donating or finding out more should visit 1000friendsphb.org.

1000 Friends Protecting Historic Benicia

Future Conditions on Jefferson St. Looking West from the Clock Tower

Mass and Location of Proposed Buildings: historic structures are identified by name and arrows; all others are proposed new construction



<https://1000friendsphb.org/donate/>

Mail checks to P.O. Box 193, Benicia, 94510
Visit 1000FriendsProtectingHistoricBenicia.org