

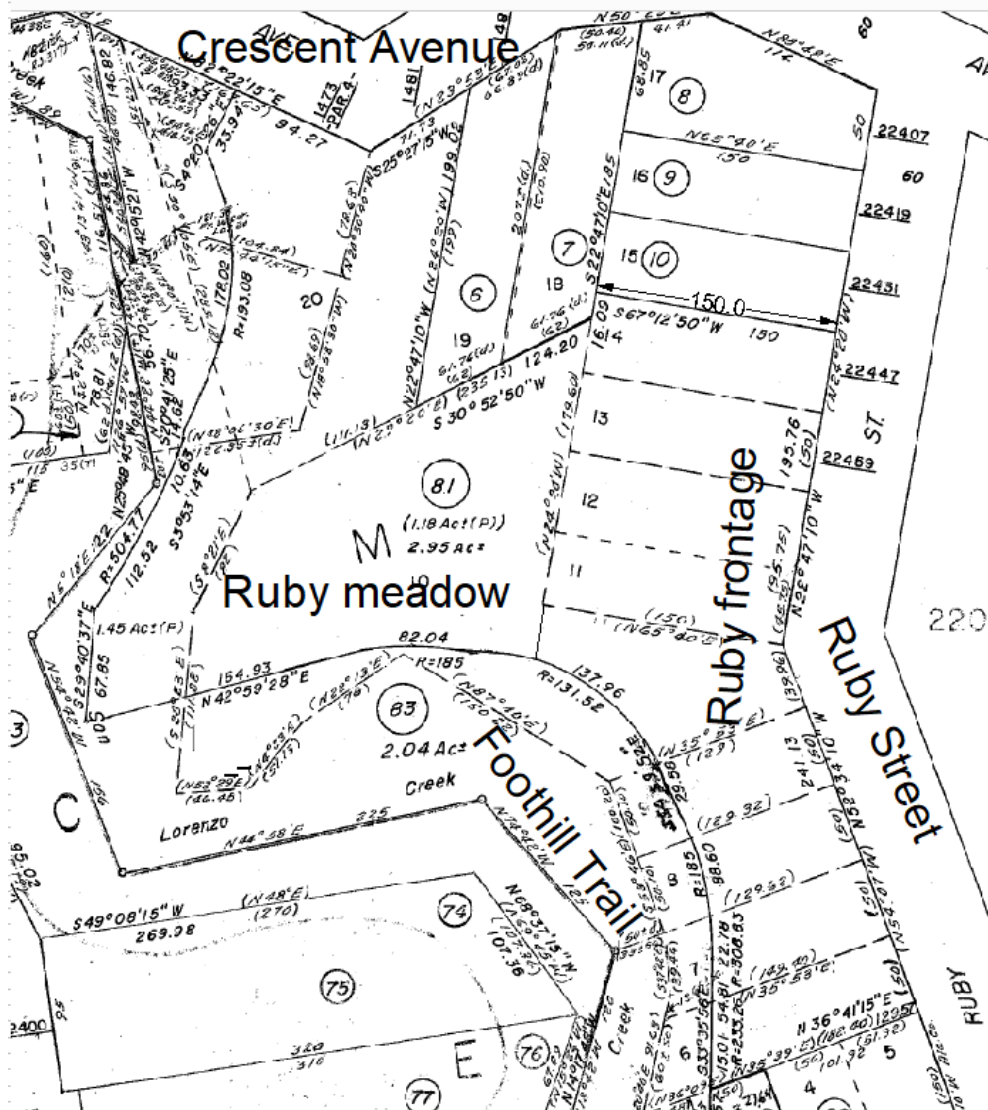
# Saving Ruby Meadow

Hayward Area Planning Association, Sherman Lewis, President, 6/22/2021

HAPA is working with the Grove Way Neighborhood Association, Friends of San Lorenzo Creek, \ and neighbors of the meadow to save Ruby Meadow.

We ask Eden Housing to cancel its current project and propose a project on Ruby frontage consistent with the former zoning, with Eden's Valbridge appraisal, and with the character of the neighborhood. Failing that, we ask that Eden give us some time to find funds to buy the meadow, working with HARD, Supervisor Miley, Alameda County, and the City of Hayward.

When the property was sold to Eden, Eden could have proposed a project on Ruby frontage consistent with the Valbridge appraisal and with the character of the neighborhood. According Valbridge, "Based on the current zoning and general plan the Site Plan indicates approximately 50 dwelling units are possible on the 2.73-acre portion of the developable portion of the site..." Valbridge estimated (p. 38) that land on A Street now owned by HARD could hold 12 units, leaving 38 units on the Eden property. My estimate of the potential units on Ruby Street frontage, explained below, is 42 units. The cost of the meadow using Valbridge, and the assessed value is about \$1,039,000.



Eden is trying to build 72 units four stories high in a two-story neighborhood. Eden plans to pave over the meadow and cut down dozens of old trees, including heritage trees with

diameters of two feet or larger. The trees include Coast Live Oak, California Bay Laurel, and Coast Redwoods. The historic woodland is an integral part of the natural area of the creek. Eden plans to have too many parking spaces, and to bundle the parking into the rent, thus subsidizing auto dependency, increasing global warming gases. The project reduces potential parkland in a low-income neighborhood (AB 1550 low-income priority neighborhood) with a severe deficit of parks (Quimby Act, HARD). The project destroys unique, irreplaceable parkland and degrades the environment. It ignores centrally located sites with more potential for affordable housing.

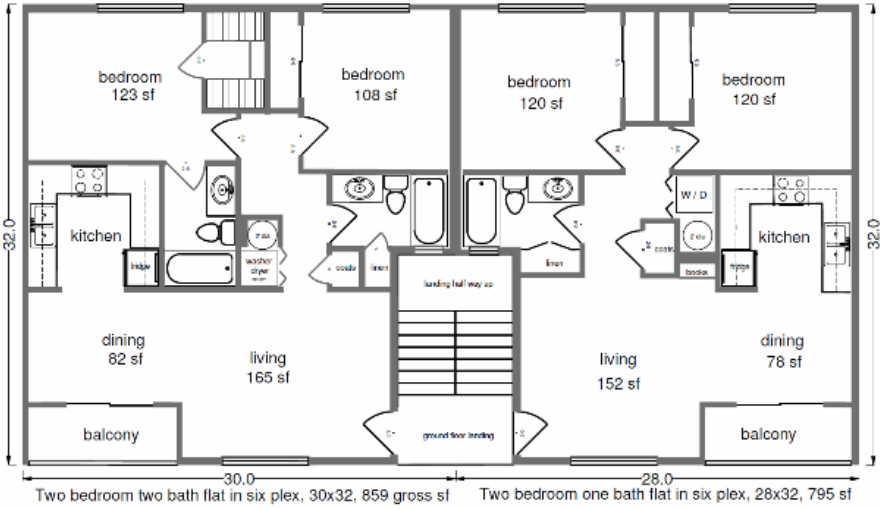
The image above shows both the old lot lines and the new ones. The old area had 20 parcels; the new one has three. The three new parcels are the creek on west, the Foothill Trail in the middle, and the Eden property on the east. The Eden property is divided between the meadow on the west and the Ruby frontage on the east. The image adds a line to lot 81 on the bend in the street to create a border between the meadow and the frontage. The meadow is the west side lot 81 and on up to Crescent St.

According to my Design CAD program, Eden’s property has 128,470 square feet (2.95 acres), of which previously developed frontage on Ruby Street has 59,320 square feet and Ruby Meadow has 69,150 square feet (1.29 acres), which is 53.8% of Eden’s property.

**Estimated holding capacity.**

**Buildings**

The floorplan of two-bedroom units in a fourplex two stories high was used to estimate holding capacity. It is 58 feet wide in front and 32 feet long on the side. As a row house, it has no side windows and can be built side-by-side.



Ruby Street frontage is in two parts, south and north.

**South side**

The south side has a depth of 90 feet to the Foothill Trail, a length of 240 feet, and an area of 21,600 sq ft. The fronts of the fourplexes are turned sideways to the street and face a courtyard with another fourplex. Going from the street to the back lot line there could be a parking space 18 feet deep, then 4 feet of setback, 58 feet of fourplex, and 10 feet of side yard setback, for total of 90 feet reaching the back lot line.

The length along south Ruby could be 15 feet of backyard, 32 feet of building side, and 15 feet for half the courtyard facing the next fourplex, totaling 62 feet for one fourplex. Four fourplexes need 248 feet, 8 feet over the available distance of 240 feet. That distance is available in the small triangle area where the property bends.

There is room for 16 units on south Ruby. Valbridge estimated 12 units.

**North side**

The street bends, and the north side goes 150 feet to its back lot line. It has a length of 200 feet and an area of 30,000 square feet. The depth indicates a design with a parking access lane

and parking down the middle between Ruby St. and the back lot line. The lane would be 20 feet wide with parking 18 feet deep on the sides for a total width of 56 feet. 47 feet remain on either side of the parking. Each side could have fourplexes facing the parking with 13-foot back yards, 32-foot sides of the building, and 2 feet to parking, adding to 47 feet. These numbers are close enough as an estimate.

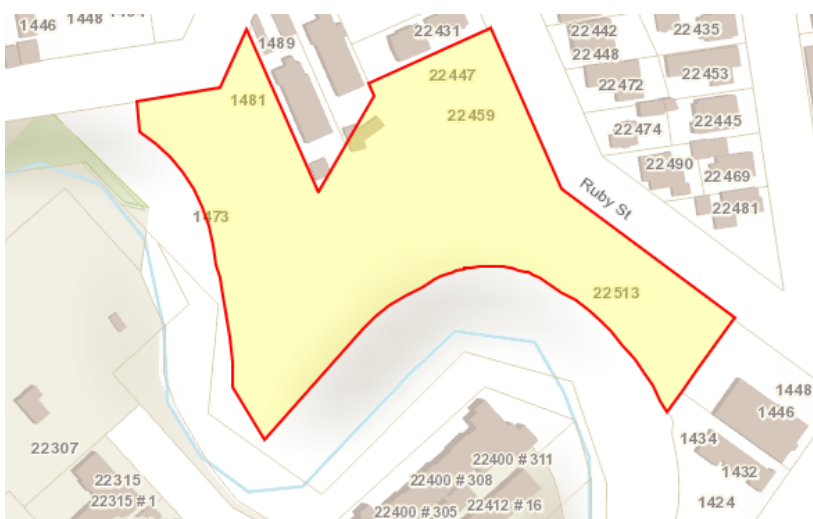
The fourplexes could face the parking with a width of 58 feet each. The number facing the parking could be 3.45, 32 feet too long. Again, the triangle area could allow eight fourplexes, or 32 units. Valbridge estimated 14 units plus a community administration building which could have 4 units instead, for a total of 18 units.

### **Parking**

Low-income households do not need more than one space per household. Parking would have one car per unit, indicating a need for 42 spaces. South Ruby has 240 feet, allowing 27 spaces for 16 units, more than enough. The parking in north Ruby is 200 feet long with parking on both side for a total of 44 spaces for 32 units, more than enough.

The efficiency of land use is improved by eliminating parking lot access lanes and less internal open space within the building area.

### **Eden Ruby property**



APN 415-230-81  
415-0230-081-00  
2.95 acres  
Total Taxable Value \$1,930,656  
\$655,000 per acre, \$15 per sq  
foot. Owner RUBY STREET L P,  
22645 GRAND ST, HAYWARD CA  
94541.

**The meadow is 53.8% of the  
area, applied to \$1,930,656 is  
\$1,039,000.**

### **Two other parcels:**

415-0230-083-00. Acres 2.03. \$1,330,590

415-0230-073-00. Acres 0.80. \$524,790.

Total all three: \$3,261,246. Valbridge appraised in April 2018 at \$ \$4,025,000.

owner of both: RUBY STREET L P,

### **Appraisal**

The only appraisal was by Valbridge Property Advisors for Eden Housing on May 12, 2017. The appraised value was \$4,025,000, or \$80,500 per unit. This appraisal was used by Eden, Caltrans, the CTC, and Alameda County. The Ruby area was on the Caltrans approved list of April 2018 for sale as excess land. The CTC approved the sale of 6.24 acres on June 27, 2018 for the appraised value. The Housing Agency of Alameda County in April 2018 authorized acquisition by Eden Housing on June 13, 2018, for \$4,025,000.

The Valbridge proposed site plan shows on 12 units on south Ruby, 14 units on north Ruby, and 12 units on the meadow for a total of 38 units with a value of \$3,059,000. The land value of the meadow area would be **\$1,645,742**. The Assessor is underassessing the land by \$606,742.

More from Valbridge: It never considered the potential for a density bonus as part of the appraisal. Valbridge, in fact, envisioned a project consistent with the zoning and neighborhood character:

“The current zoning controls the general nature of permissible uses but is appropriate for the location and physical elements of the subject property, providing for a consistency of use with the general neighborhood. The location of the subject property is appropriate for the uses allowed, as noted previously, and a change in zoning is unlikely.”

Valbridge failed to notice the possibility of density bonus within the existing zoning, but the bonus accomplished the same thing.

Eden’s project ignores the Valbridge appraisal and maximizes housing at the expense of neighborhood character and needed parkland. We do not oppose the affordable housing that was deemed appropriate in Valbridge’s appraisal, which included a site plan.

### **Meeting the need at Hayward BART.**

We propose that Eden develop the vacant surface parking across from its offices next to the Hayward BART station with as many or more units as would be lost from building two-story affordables on Ruby frontage and saving Ruby Meadow. This property is already designated and zoned for development and BART policy supports housing development by the station. The area is part of Hayward’s PDA approved by MTC. The location favors sustainable modes of transportation and unbundling.

### **Will more affordables aggravate the park deficit for low-income people?**

AB 1550 establishes the criteria for designating low-income priority neighborhoods, which include the Baywood area around Ruby Meadow south of 580 from Redwood Road to Foothill Boulevard. The Quimby Act establishes criteria for parkland minimums. The Ruby area has a severe deficit of local parkland.

The Eden project at the Presbyterian Church and the RCD project at Foothill and Grove Way may build about 300 more units of affordable housing. We need to avoid the mistakes made in the Ruby project. We need to insist that Environmental Impact Reports be written, the worsening of a severe parkland deficit be recognized, and the deficit be mitigated by purchase of parkland comparable to Ruby Meadow. We are working with our attorney to get an early start on these issues.

I can understand Eden’s reluctance to change the plan at this late date, but it would be the right thing to do.