

# Council OKs downtown co-housing project

19-unit building slated  
for Walnut Avenue

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SANTA CRUZ — The City Council approved a 19-unit co-housing project for downtown Tuesday that will include common spaces for dining, recreation and education. It's only the city's second co-housing project, the other on Western Drive.

The 13,892-square-foot Walnut Commons at the corner of Walnut Avenue and Center Street will include eight single-bedroom units, nine two-bedroom units and two three-bedroom units ranging from 703 square feet to 1,289 square feet. Nearly half of the project will have common or open space.

Co-developer Jeff Major described it as, "Privacy when you want it and community when you want it."

Vice Mayor Hilary Bryant, a former real estate broker, said she appreciated the co-housing concept.

"It's not for everyone, but those who it is for, I think it's great," she said.

With tiled roofs and plaster walls done in a Spanish Mediterranean style, the \$8.4 million project partly developed by Barry Swenson Builder also will include 21 auto spaces beneath and

## CO-HOUSING

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29 bike spaces, with the idea that some residents will share vehicles.

The project has 13 buyers now. It requires three affordable housing units, all of which may be on site though some would be made

or paid for offsite by the developer.

Ralph Meyberg, a founder of the Downtown Neighbors Association, raised concerns about the building's interface with the rest of the Walnut Avenue corridor, which just a block away contains leaf-lined sidewalks fronting historic homes. But council members said they believe the project is a good fit for

downtown.

The Planning Commission recommended the project in June after residents reached an agreement with nearby St. Elias Greek Orthodox Church to establish a common wall on the property line. The move came after concerns from the church about views onto that property from residential balconies.

The council will take its

summer break in August and meet again Sept. 4 possibly to consider permits and financial agreements for the Santa Cruz Warriors facility. The NBA Development League team hopes to begin playing in the temporary facility on Front Street in December.

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