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[Letters to the Editor – East Bay Times](#)

## **Published Supporter Letters to the Editor:**

### **Diablo Glen Will Ruin Walnut Creek**

9/21/2022 East Bay Times [Online and print edition]

I strongly oppose the Spieker development proposal called Diablo Glen.

I've lived in Walnut Creek for 25 years and love living here for a variety of reasons. At 85, I've seen the changes and agree with many of them, but Diablo Glen is about to wreak havoc on this part of our city.

Let's put businesses where they are, not neighborhoods where it will affect kids and adults, the open spaces that have defined our city, the biking and walking paths and the views of our beautiful Mount Diablo. The project will bring four or five years of noise, dirt, dust and trucks within an area that includes the Clark Swimming Facility, Heather Farms Rose Garden, Heather Farms Park and playgrounds where families gather for picnics each weekend.

Let us enjoy the beauty of Walnut Creek.

Francine Ruotolo  
*Walnut Creek*

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### **Contra Costa ignores voters at their peril**

7/26/2022 East Bay Times [Online and print edition]

Contra Costa County is evaluating the environmental impact report for a proposal by Spieker to develop the land of the Seven Hills Ranch in unincorporated Walnut Creek as a dense high-rise and restricted area in the midst of neighborhood housing. The development is strongly opposed by the community as evidenced by organized action in the community over a three-year period, numerous public rallies and a petition signed by over 4,000 people.

The latest community outreach to stop the Spieker development was attendance at the Walnut Creek City Council meeting, which was standing room only with community members opposed to the Spieker plan.

The city of Walnut Creek and the county supervisors must consider the opposition of the Walnut Creek community as the Spieker plan is evaluated, and be aware that the 4,000 people who have signed the petition are active voters.

Diane Yoder  
*Walnut Creek*

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### [Seven Hills doesn't pencil out for seniors](#)

6/8/2022 East Bay Times [Online and print edition]

Re: "Seven Hills is right choice for seniors," Page A6, June 7:

As a senior, I disagree that a senior home with an entry fee of \$500,000 and a monthly cost of \$4,000-\$6,000 is right for me or Walnut Creek.

The reason I moved to Walnut Creek many years ago is its beauty and ease of life. The letter-writer says we have "a lot" of parks, and that potential residents of the new senior facility would leave the state if it isn't built. I believe our area already has a lot of senior care facilities. There is no mention of the years of disruption caused by the construction of this huge complex, and the traffic that 400 cars per day would create in a quiet neighborhood after it's built.

I walk to Seven Hills Ranch several times a week, to take in its beauty and enjoy the quiet. Saving Seven Hills Ranch will save so much more.

Sam Van Zandt  
*Walnut Creek*

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### [Protect Seven Hills from outsized development](#)

6/1/2022 East Bay Times [Online and print edition] and 6/10/22 Walnut Creek Journal print

Walnut Creek has a unique balance of urban and natural spaces that are critical for healthy living and fighting climate change. That will be destroyed if the Seven Hills ranch is rezoned with the Spieker proposal for an outsized development in the middle of a residential neighborhood, next to Heather Farm Park.

Walnut Creek already has a large community for seniors in Rossmoor. We do not need to kill 400 mature trees, including California oaks, eliminate a key wildlife corridor, and destroy a nationally recognized home and migration stopover for birds and wildlife and replace it with an inaccessible gated community that will have a permanent impact on the neighborhood with additional traffic and pollution.

The county should reject the rezoning for the Spieker proposal. We can and should do better to preserve this space for future generations and our fight against climate change.

Radhika Srinivasan  
*Walnut Creek*

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### [Profit, not benefits, optimized at Seven Hills](#)

5/30/2022 East Bay Times [Online and print edition]

Too many times communities are presented with plans that maximize developer profits with maximal tax revenue, perhaps a worthy outcome. From a resident's perspective, successful planning tends to result from optimizing benefits to the community at large while scrutinizing a max-scaled project's unintended consequences.

Solely based on the description of this project, its objective is clearly scaled to generate profits based on the high cost of site preparation and structural construction. Four years to construct, an estimated 17,000 truckloads of excavated material (onto Ygnacio Valley Road), hundreds of parking spaces – these illustrate quite the effort to transform a secluded property. Can a smaller-scale development be viable at this location with the high cost of site development and construction?

The county can do better to serve its many communities and regional needs.

Lester Tong  
*Walnut Creek*

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### [We need a new plan for Seven Hills Ranch](#)

5/20/2022 East Bay Times [Print and online edition]

I request that the county consider alternative, preferable plans to the Spieker proposal for Seven Hills Ranch.

While the consultant's draft environmental impact report has said that the environmental impacts can be mitigated we ask that you use common sense and consider that very nearly all of the natural environment at the site will be completely decimated. The proposal includes the removal of 400 trees, the leveling of all but one hill, and the nearly complete paving and building over of the site.

To state that such impacts can be mitigated is nonsensical. We are asking for sensible, not supersized — a plan that truly respects the environment, doesn't require unenforceable and ineffective mitigation, and recognizes the property's unique location next to the existing Heather Farm Park. We ask that the county not amend the General Plan for this.

Yulia Kalk  
*Walnut Creek*

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### [Seven Hills needs a reliable EIR](#)

5/18/2022 East Bay Times [Print and online edition]

The draft Environmental Impact Report recently released for the Spieker project at Seven Hills Ranch is inadequate in assessing the true environmental impacts to a virtually pristine and bucolic natural environment by a proposal that effectively demolishes every living thing on the 30-acre property, and paves over and flattens all but one hill of, ironically, the Seven Hills Ranch.

The draft should be recirculated for a more serious, realistic and authentic evaluation of the impacts of the Spieker proposal. In addition, I request that the county further deny the General Plan Amendment request included in the Spieker proposal for Seven Hills Ranch.

Sarah Kalin  
*Walnut Creek*

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### [Too much at stake in Walnut Creek proposal](#)

10/6/2021 East Bay Times [Print and online edition]

I am one of the Walnut Creek citizens who oppose the Spieker proposal for developing Seven Hills Ranch open space. You can see that more than 2,500 people share my concern and signed the petition for saving this open space.

My main objections:

- Impact on transportation: Ygnacio Valley Road has enough traffic problems. Adding several hundred cars during and after 3-4 years of construction may cause the loss of one lane on Ygnacio Valley Road from BART and freeways because the left turn pocket from Ygnacio Valley Road to Marchbanks will be overcrowded and will create a traffic jam not seen even before the pandemic.
- Environmental impact: Losing up to 400 trees (most of them are protected ones) with all the birds, deer and other species that depend on this open space. The majority of residents of Walnut Creek and Contra Costa County are very sensitive to such losses.

Igor Svidler  
*Walnut Creek*

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### [Preserving Seven Hills boon for Walnut Creek](#)

8/18/2021 East Bay Times [Print and online edition]

I was fortunate enough to be able to work with Walnut Creek citizens who created the existing Open Space. The passage of that bond issue spoke volumes about the residents of this incredible city, and set us apart from other ho-hum suburbs.

To repeat that effort and keep Seven Hills in its current state will do the same, once again—we will be admired and praised for preventing the city from slipping back and becoming pretty much just like every other Bay Area suburb.

Keeping Seven Hills as open space will make Walnut Creek unique among cities in the entire country; another cluster of homes will not.

Bruce Reeves,  
*Walnut Creek*

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### [Save precious open space from development](#)

7/21/2021 East Bay Times [Print and online edition]

Please save Seven Hills Ranch. The Adobe house there was built by Sheridan Hale, owner of Seven Hills Ranch, and he made clear to those who knew him that he wanted his land to be kept free of dense housing and preserved for a beautiful open space for hiking and enjoying nature.

Please do not let this treasure go to waste.

Yvonne Correia

*Walnut Creek*  
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### **[Save unspoiled parcel from ruinous project](#)**

8/5//2021 East Bay Times [Print and online edition]

The last unspoiled parcel of Walnut Creek, Seven Hills Ranch, a 30-acre connection to the 1800s adjacent to Heather Farm Park, is threatened by Spieker Senior Development Partners, wanting to level those hills, remove 400 oxygen-returning trees, and erect several three- and four-story buildings, 52 single-story “cottage residences,” a large clubhouse, a recreation center, an 85,000-square-foot health care facility for eight dozen wealthy seniors requiring nursing care and 594 parking spaces. Four years of round-the-clock construction, 17,000 truckloads of earth rumbling down residential streets, leaving us with more light, noise and air pollution, despite the Bay Area’s latter already worse than New York City’s.

To think Walnut Creek’s logo is a tree. Cue Joni Mitchell’s “Big Yellow Taxi” — “they paved paradise, put up a parking lot.” Sign the petition, and call and email county Supervisors Karen Mitchoff and Candace Andersen.

Mike Scott  
*Walnut Creek*  
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### **[Better sites to build retirement community](#)**

6/25/2021 East Bay Times [Print and online edition]

The proposed continuing care retirement community development at Seven Hills Ranch, currently 30 acres of undeveloped land adjacent to Heather Farm Park, is devastating. More than 17,000 dump trucks of dirt will be rearranged or removed. The hills will be razed, the valleys will be filled and hundreds of trees will be cut down to create a large flat surface to build on, according to [savesevenhillsranch.org](http://savesevenhillsranch.org). And 6,000 of those dump trucks of dirt (12,000 round trips) will be hauled out via Ygnacio Valley Road.

If we as a community decide such a development is needed (sometimes hard to imagine as we are asked to cut back on water and electricity due to mass shortages), we should start with already developed lots (a la Shadelands) vs. building over some of the last large plots of natural land, especially given its location next to a park.

Kristen Lomasney  
*Walnut Creek*  
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### **[Too few benefit from costly development](#)**

6/23/2021 East Bay Times [Print and online edition]

The huge development proposed for Seven Hills Ranch property next to Heather Farm Park is emphatically NOT housing for workers and families. In fact it's not really considered "housing", so it will not include ANY market rate or below-market units. It is primarily a residential medical facility serving only a sliver of wealthy elderly residents who will leave behind multi-million dollar homes that no worker could afford to buy.

We might make the sacrifice - paving over and building out 30 acres of natural habitat, cutting down 350 trees (many heritage oaks), and razing the seven hills and dumping them in the creekbeds - for family housing, but this is not that. It benefits only a privileged few in a narrow age group.

Find out about it at [www.savesevenhillsranch.org](http://www.savesevenhillsranch.org).

Rosalie Howarth  
*Walnut Creek*

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### **[Preserve open space for Walnut Creek](#)**

6/10/2021 East Bay Times [Print and online edition]

The open space in Walnut Creek is an attribute to our community.

The Seven Hills Ranch property abuts Heather Farms, and the continuity of open space must be preserved, not only for ecological reasons but for humankind.

It's a respite in our busy city.

Nancy Simmons  
*Walnut Creek*

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### **[Few would benefit, land would suffer from project](#)**

3/17/2021 East Bay Times [Print and online edition]

Regarding "[Planned senior community hits opposition](#)," (Page A1, March 11): Troy Bourne, a project official for Spieker Senior Development Partners, said, "The property's beauty will be preserved even after the retirement community is built."

I have seen the Spieker project arborist report to the county. Spieker plans to remove [353 trees](#) that are considered protected trees by the county's own [tree protection ordinance](#). This is called deforestation.

This project is proposing to grade down the beautiful rolling hills to a flat parking lot for 500 cars, condos and a convalescent hospital. This pristine 30-acre property is zoned for agriculture, not commercial, property. The general plan for this neighborhood is medium density/single family. I suggest Mr. Bourne read his own company's report on

how his corporation plans to decimate this land into a sprawling upper-end retirement village that only benefits itself.

Rosemary Nishikawa  
*Walnut Creek*

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