

East Meadow Update, 6/28/20
Report on our lawsuit

We have a verdict in our case against the East Meadow portion of the Student Housing West project. The Judge has ruled that the approval of the project by the Regents was improper because their approval was based largely on conclusions about cost comparisons, and the University failed to provide all the Regents with the cost analyses that would have enabled an informed decision. Therefore the Judge has indicated that when he issues his final writ in late August, he will order the Regents to rescind their approval of the project.

While this is a victory, it is a temporary victory. The University can now provide the full Board of Regents with the previously withheld cost analysis, and the Regents can then either re-approve the original project or seriously consider changes. Nonetheless, we think that this ruling opens the door to serious discussion of a revised plan that would spare the East Meadow.

We also made other arguments under California environmental law for ordering the Regents to rescind their approval. These were unsuccessful. The strict confines of environmental litigation proved too narrow to fully demonstrate in this proceeding the previous UCSC administration's flawed approach to this project. If the Judge had approved our arguments, it would have been more difficult and time-consuming for the university to respond.

We have a number of possibilities for making this positive outcome more long-lasting. We can persuade the UCSC administration that the project as proposed is destructive to the campus and that better alternatives are available. We can persuade the Regents not to approve this project unless it is modified to avoid the Meadow. We can go to the Appeals Court to try to win on the arguments that would make our victory more secure.

So there is work to be done. We will keep you informed about the best way forward and what you can do to help. Thank you for all your continued support.

EMAC
East Meadow Action Committee