

ATTACHMENT M

**CORRESPONDENCE
FOR
APRIL 2, 2007
COUNCIL MEETING**

Rodriguez, Jane

From: Barbara Bishop [barbarart@hotmail.com]

Sent: Sunday, March 18, 2007 9:38 AM

To: cityclerk

Subject: Ambassador West Project, Senior Living Structure Too Tall

May I voice my opinion that the proposed senior living structure is too tall for the site and the "feel" of the neighborhood.

Surrounding structures are typically 3 stories; the senior structure is proposed at 6 stories.

I say NO, do not build a 6 story structure on that section of Green Street.

Thank you,

Barbara Bishop

315 S. Orange Grove Blvd.

Pasadena

Exercise your brain! Try Flexicon.

**Robert J. Magilligan
309 Oaklawn
South Pasadena, California 91030
Telephone: 626-441-6772**

March 28, 2007

Hon. City Council Members
City of Pasadena
117 E. Colorado Blvd.—6th Floor
Pasadena, California 91105

Re: Negative Environmental Effects of Ambassador West Project On Historic Resources in South Pasadena and Required Mitigation

Hon. City Council Members:

Vehicular traffic generated by the proposed Ambassador West project (the Project) will have a catastrophic negative impact on my historic South Pasadena neighborhood, Oaklawn, which was determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places in 1977/8 as an historic district and is thus eligible for the protections afforded historic places by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

It is apparent that residents, tenants, and other users of the Project will be dependent on motor vehicles for transportation since about 644 parking spaces are included in the project. Numerous additional motor vehicle trips will arise from commercial activities. Many more motor vehicle trips will be generated during the construction period.

A very substantial portion of these motor vehicles will travel on Fremont Avenue which borders the Oaklawn historic district on the West, and which provides the most convenient access from the Project to urban centers to the south and the 10 and 710 freeways.

Motorists have many alternatives to Fremont Avenue in this corridor for north south travel, but alternative routes have been de emphasized by the Cities of South Pasadena, Pasadena, and Alhambra, leaving Fremont Avenue the favored route of motorists traveling to and from western Pasadena and Alhambra and for freeway access. Until the mid 1970s Fremont Avenue was a quiet residential street, serving mostly local neighborhood needs. However, since this time numerous unmitigated roadway improvements and development projects in communities neighboring South Pasadena have literally converted Fremont Avenue into a freeway. It is the busiest and most dangerous street in South Pasadena, used by about 12,500 motorists per lane per day. Fremont Avenue was originally constructed with a maximum capacity of 2,500 vehicles trips per day, and is now being used at a rate ten times that capacity.

The negative effects of this traffic are greatly magnified by the absolute lack of traffic law enforcement on Fremont Avenue by the South Pasadena Police Department and minimal traffic law enforcement on St. Johns and Pasadena Avenue by the Pasadena Police Department. This lack of traffic law enforcement has caused many negative impacts, including the illegal use of Fremont Avenue as a truck route by thousands of heavy commercial vehicles on a daily basis.

The Final Environmental Impact Report (the EIR) for the "Ambassador West" Project is grossly deficient in that it does not consider and mitigate the negative impacts on the Oaklawn historic district of Fremont Avenue traffic generated by the Project and must not be adopted by the City Council at its Monday, April 2, 2007 meeting. Sufficient mitigation measures to reduce or eliminate the devastating impacts on the Oaklawn historic district of increased vehicular traffic on Fremont Avenue, during and after construction of the Project must be designed and implemented.

The EIR is deficient and in violation of CEQA in the following areas and must not be adopted by the Pasadena City Council (this list is not intended to be all inclusive):

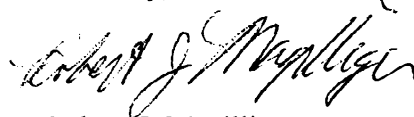
1. *Violations of CEQA's Notification Requirements:* CEQA requires that all parties impacted by a project must receive appropriate notice of a project and be given an opportunity to comment. Only impacted parties resident within Pasadena received notice of the Project and were invited to comment. Other parties impacted by the Project, including but not limited to, the residents of the Oaklawn historic district, were not notified as required by CEQA of the Project's scope and were given no opportunity to comment. **The EIR is therefor deficient and must not be adopted.**
2. *Violations of CEQA's Requirements to Mitigate Negative Impacts on Historic Resources, Including, But Not Limited to the Oaklawn Historic District:* CEQA requires government agencies to consider and mitigate the negative impacts of projects they approve. **No mitigation measures of the negative impacts to the Oaklawn historic district of traffic generated by the project were considered designed or implemented, and the EIR is deficient and must not be adopted.**
3. *Violations of CEQA's Requirements to Mitigate Cumulative Negative Impacts on Historic Resources, Including, But Not Limited to the Oaklawn Historic District:* Well in excess of one dozen projects sponsored by various government agencies since Oaklawn was determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places about 30 years ago have had catastrophic negative impacts, none of which were mitigated. Under CEQA's cumulative effects rule, regardless of the insignificance of the traffic impacts of the Project on the Oaklawn historic district, all previous negative impacts to the Oaklawn historic district must be mitigated before construction of the Project begins. **No mitigation measures of the cumulative negative impacts on the Oaklawn historic district of numerous Fremont Avenue transportation improvement and development**

projects have been considered, designed, or implemented by the various government agencies sponsoring the projects over a thirty year period and the EIR is deficient and must not be adopted.

A list of mitigation measures is attached.

These unmitigated Fremont Avenue traffic conditions have inflicted catastrophic losses on the Oaklawn historic district's homeowners. In my case, the market value of my home has been permanently reduced by at least \$1 million by the unmitigated traffic conditions, which have also caused at least \$1 million in physical damages. Similar losses have been suffered by other homeowners.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert J. Magilligan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "R".

Robert J. Magilligan

CC: South Pasadena City Manager
Hon. Richard Schneider
Darrell Cozen

Mitigation Measures for Fremont Avenue

Two Month Time Frame (Fremont between Grevalia and Columbia)

- Add bump outs and stripe pavement to narrow traffic lanes to 10 feet
- Add bump outs at corner of Fremont and Columbia (both sides of street)
- Restore sidewalk on eastern side of Fremont at Gold Line crossing
- Install at least 20 speed bumps to discourage motorcycle and truck traffic
- Delete smart signal at Fremont and Mission
- Eliminate red “no parking” curbs and restore all neighborhood street parking
- Establish “quiet zone” with signs posting \$1,000 fine for violation of noise ordinances.
- Other measures

Six Month Time Frame (Fremont between Columbia and Alhambra Road)

- Establish and post 25 mile per hour speed limit
- Re open Beacon and Fair View streets at Columbia
- Add “urban design” elements from Low Build, including raised pedestrian crossings and bump outs at all intersections (p. 28)
- Eliminate continuous left hand turn lane
- Eliminate red “no parking” curbs and restore all neighborhood street parking
- De synchronize all traffic signals to create 25 mile per hour speed limit
- Establish ten foot traffic lanes with bump outs, striping and other measures
- Install pedestrian friendly traffic signalization, especially at Fremont and Buena Vista Lanes, and synchronized signalization between Mission and Columbia that prevents traffic from backing up due to Gold Line grade crossing.
- Install rubberized asphalt pavement in residential areas.

- Other measures

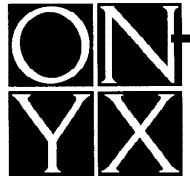
Twelve Month Time Frame (Fremont between Columbia and Alhambra Road)

- Restrict Fremont between Mission and Columbia to local traffic only—through traffic to be diverted to Fair Oaks and Orange Grove by signage and physical barriers at Mission and Columbia
- Re route commercial vehicles to Huntington and terminate Fremont truck route
- Add bicycle lanes from Alhambra Road to Grevalia
- Other measures

Oaklawn Mitigation Measures—12 Month Time Frame

Oaklawn and its important historic homes have been devastated by the cumulative effect of 30 years of CEQA violations by the City of South Pasadena and other government agencies. To offset some (but not all) of the losses suffered by Oaklawn's residents, the following mitigation measures are necessary:

- Restoration of Oaklawn's great oak and its surround
- Restoration of perimeter wall and fence
- Restoration of gateway at Columbia
- Restoration of historic street lighting
- Enforcement of South Pasadena Code
- Funding of costs of nomination to National Historic Landmark status
- Other measures



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CITY CLERK
CITY OF PASADENA

28 March 2007

City Council Members
City of Pasadena
100 N. Garfield Avenue, # 237
Pasadena, CA 91109
(626) 744-4311

Re: Ambassador West Final EIR

Dear Honorable Mayor Bogaard and Council Members:

In Response to some of the concerns raised by Harvest Rock Church that the scale of the proposed Sunrise Senior Living Facility will diminish the concert-going experience at the Ambassador Auditorium and thereby adversely impact the Ambassador Auditorium, we have enclosed photographs demonstrating that world-class and world renown concert halls may remain vital and are made vibrant in proximity to larger and taller buildings, which are a natural part of an urban environment.

Sincerely,

Dale Brown, AIA
Onyx Architects
For Ambassador West

O N Y X A R C H I T E C T S

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KENNETH P. SCOFIELD, AIA WWW.ONYXARCHITECTS.COM



28 March 2007

Darrel Cozen
Senior Planner
City of Pasadena
Planning and Development Department
175 N. Garfield Ave.
Pasadena, CA 91101-1704

Re: Ambassador West Project—Harvest Rock Church Proposed Alternative

This letter evaluates the feasibility of the project alternative proposed by Kathrina Higashi (on behalf of Harvest Rock Church) at the 12 March, 2007 City Council hearing on the proposed Ambassador West Project. As shown on the conceptual drawings provided by Ms. Higashi, she proposes that the Sunrise Senior Living Facility be divided into two buildings with a large separation and courtyard running north to south, and aligning with the Ambassador Auditorium fountain and reflecting pool (the "Higashi Alternative"). Onyx Architects has evaluated the Higashi Alternative and has found that it is not feasible.

The California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") allows proposed alternatives to be rejected if they are infeasible. Feasibility is an appropriate criterion in evaluating project alternatives. CEQA defines "feasible" as "being accomplished in a successful manner within a reasonable period of time, taking into account economic, environmental, legal, social, and technological factors."

For the following reasons, the Higashi Alternative is infeasible:

1. Residents of senior living facilities expect all services to be conveniently located in a single building. Exiting one building, walking outdoors, and entering another building for necessary services would be very difficult for seniors with disabilities or who require assistance. The outdoor portion of the Higashi Alternative would need to accommodate the disability demands associated with requiring residents to cross through an open area or both buildings would each need to house the necessary services. If each building contained the necessary services required within a senior living facility, without requiring guests to go outdoors for needed services (such as dining, health, and other services), the Higashi Alternative would result in unnecessary and costly duplication of services thus requiring more common space and floor space that are dedicated to providing such services.

ONYX ARCHITECTS

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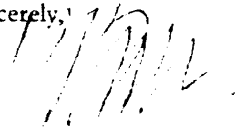
04/02/2007
6.C. 7:30 P.M.

Furthermore, all the primary common area facilities are located on the first floor of the lower campus building. The basic idea in clustering these facilities together is to create and promote a strong sense of community and to efficiently provide services to the residents, such as one kitchen providing cooking services to multiple dining venues. Splitting the first floor in two parts negates community functions and severely impacts efficient delivery of services. Consequently, the Higashi Alternative is both economically and socially infeasible.

2. The Higashi Alternative is economically infeasible because it would increase the proportion of exterior building skin finishes as compared to the proposed project. By creating two buildings from one building the amount of exterior wall construction would increase and thereby increase the cost of the Sunrise Senior Living Facility. The Higashi Alternative would also require additional podium construction to support the two buildings as compared to a single building—also adding costs to the construction of the facility.
3. The Higashi Alternative would also be legally infeasible because it would require exceeding the height limit applicable to the property. The Sunrise Senior Living Facility is subject to a 72-foot height limit under the West Gateway Specific Plan-1A regulations. Splitting the building into two buildings would result in a loss of floor area and units that could only be recovered by increasing the height of the two new buildings above the 72-foot height limit—to even as high as 90 feet. Ms. Higashi provides no alternative plan for the loss of floor space or justification for such an increase in building height above the 72-foot limit.
4. Reducing the amount of units and floor area in the two buildings proposed in the Higashi Alternative would be economically infeasible because it would result in less units and unnecessarily duplicative services. To make economic sense, the Sunrise Senior Living Facility needs to include approximately 248 units as designed containing all the necessary services and amenities strategically located as required by its residents. In addition to the cost of the land and the buildings, Sunrise Senior Living is able to preserve and adaptively re-use the Merritt Mansion, and preserve and maintain the Merritt Gardens, and contribute to overall economics of a project that provides affordable housing and significant historic and open space preservation.
5. Lastly, the proposed large gap in our south facade would violate the historical planning idea of three existing buildings forming and defining the plaza in front of the auditorium. Some of the earliest directives from the planning department were to design our building so this concept would not be lost. This concept is an important part of the integration of our facility into the Ambassador West campus. We've spent considerable design time on multiple alternative design configurations to accomplish this. Ms. Higashi's proposal not only ignores this important basic planning concept but in fact goes completely against it.

The expressed goal of the alternate proposal was to open up views of the Auditorium and plaza from the Green street direction. These views do not now exist. The existing administration building and trees block the proposed view and to provide such a view would be inappropriate

Sincerely,

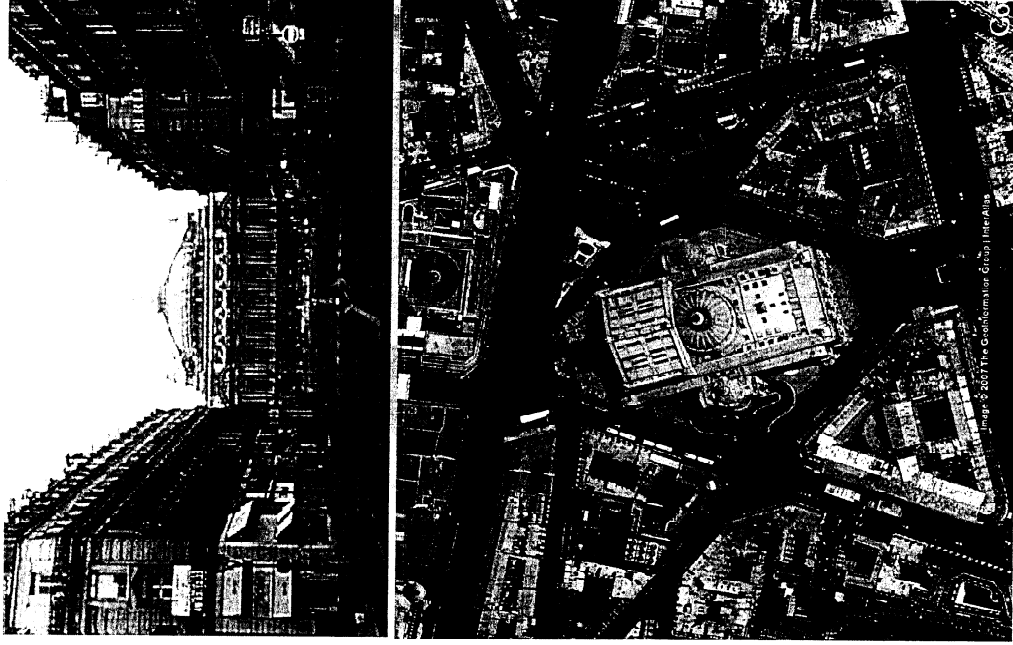


Dale Brown, AIA
Onyx Architects
For Ambassador West

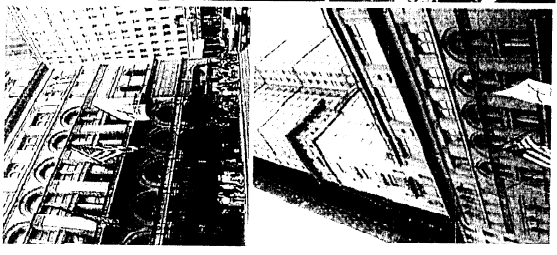
Cc Theresa Fuentes, Esq. City Attorney
Pasadena City Clerk

O N Y X A R C H I T E C T S

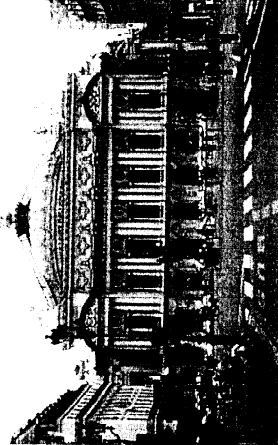
AMBASSADOR WEST



Carnegie Hall, New York City

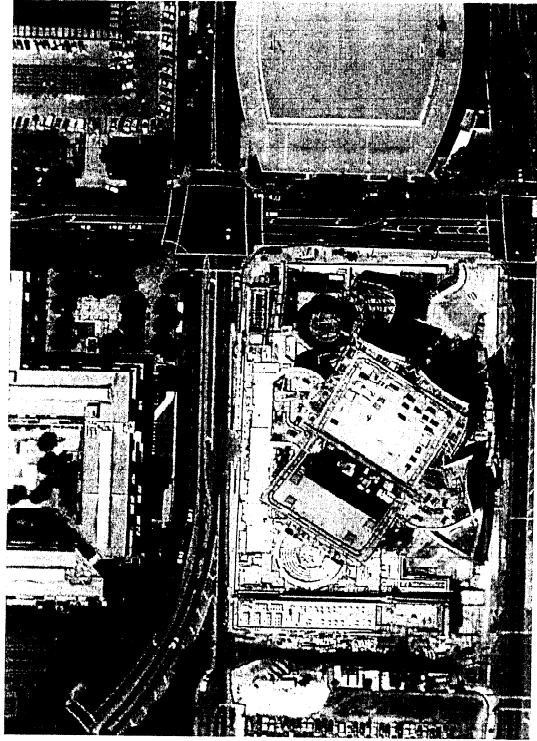
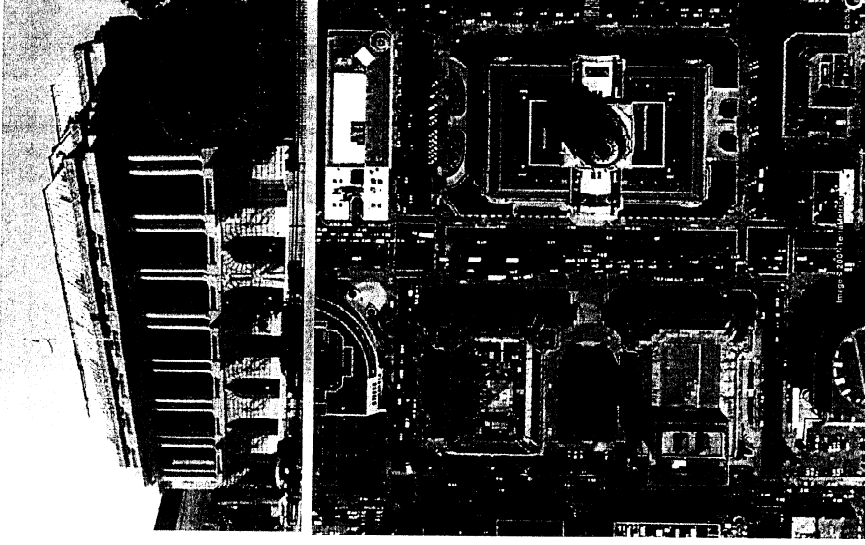


Paris Opera House, France

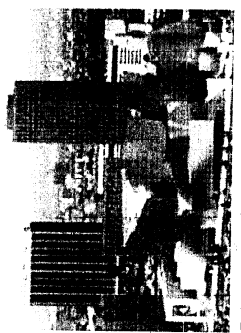


AMBASSADOR WEST

Opera House, San Francisco



Disney Concert Hall, Downtown Los Angeles



Odessa Opera House, Russia



ODYSSEY

Development Services

Fifty One West Dayton Street
Pasadena California 91105-2203
T 626.683.8159 F 626.683.2897
BurkeFarrar@EarthLink.net

April 2, 2007

Hand Delivered

Mayor and City Council
c/o Pasadena City Clerk
117 East Colorado Boulevard
Pasadena, California 91105

RE: Ambassador West – Agenda Item 6.C.

Dear Mayor and City Council Members:

I hope all remains well with each of you.

At the City Council hearing on the Ambassador West project, March 12, 2007, both Sid and Bill voiced concern regarding the Attachment J that attempts to provide an understanding of transferable development rights and justification for the 450,000 square feet proposed by the Sunrise Assisted Living portion of the project. Others too seemed to share this concern.

The current Agenda Report provides an update to the Attachment J. Based on concern of using the Great Lawn for development rights, the revised recommendation suggests increasing number of units borrowed of the West Gateway Specific Plan to justify the additional floor area requested. The increase is to 29 units from 17 units formerly included in the recommendation of March 12, 2007. The Agenda Report further states that, "Within the WGSP housing unit allocation, 75 units are available on a first-come, first-serve basis. No units have been withdrawn to date."

In actuality, the West Gateway Specific Plan provides that units are available on a first-come, first-serve basis but adds a statement, "Allocation will take place when a property owner receives a building permit," West Gateway Specific Plan, page 83. The only requirement for a property owner to have units "withdrawn" from the 75 unit allocation is obtaining a building permit.

While the Agenda Report suggests that "No units have been withdrawn to date," a total of 63 units have received building permits since the adoption of the West Gateway Specific Plan. These have been issued for two separate projects: the Vista del Arroyo project and the JSM 285 West Green Street project. Respectively, the building permits for the Vista del Arroyo project was issued 30 residential units in sequence, BLD2004-00320 through BLD2004-00328 and JSM 285 West Green Street project was issued 33 residential units under BLD2006-00650.

Ambassador West – Agenda Item 6.C.

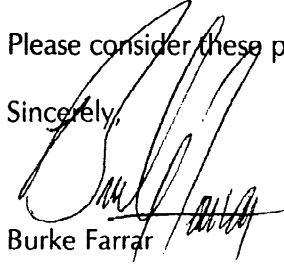
April 2, 2007

Page 2

It is by interpretation, that the statement that, "No units have been withdrawn to date," is being made. However, since development rights are transferable within the specific plan area, denying that these permits count toward the 75-unit allocation is potentially denying these property owners their rights to the provisions of the West Gateway Specific Plan in favor of the Ambassador West project. The value of the development rights is potentially worth millions of dollars to these other property owners. Because they had their building permits issued before the Ambassador West project, they have first rights to the allocation.

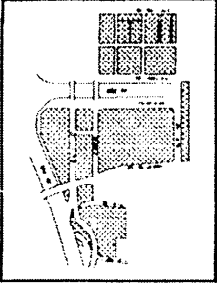
Please consider these permits in your decision on the Ambassador West project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Burke Farrar", written over a horizontal line.

Burke Farrar

The Future



Grove / Colorado Sub-Area and Vista del Arroyo bungalows Sub-areas, provided that all other land use, development and design standards are met. A process for the transfer of development rights (square feet and housing units) from one parcel to another will be established.

The height, density, land use and design standards will ensure that this development is of high quality, in appropriate locations and minimizes any negative effects on adjacent neighborhoods and businesses.

2. In the interim period prior to the General Plan "Five-Year review," to ensure that all properties have an equal opportunity to use the square footage allocated, the following policies will be applied in accordance with the General Plan:

An equal allocation to each non-residential parcel in the Orange Grove / Colorado Sub-Area and Vista del Arroyo bungalows Sub-areas of 17,500 square feet of non-residential building for each acre (43,560 sq. ft.) of property, which is equivalent to a floor area ratio (F.A.R.) of approximately 0.40.

The 75 housing units will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis, until there are no units remaining to allocate. Allocation will take place when the property owner receives a building permit. A procedure for transfer of development rights from one parcel to another will be developed.