

Jomsky, Mark

Subject:

RE: 3202 E. Foothill Blvd., Pasadena, CA 91107 – Envirostor ID# 19970020

-----Original Message-----

From: kirby351@earthlink.net [<mailto:kirby351@earthlink.net>]

Sent: Sunday, May 15, 2016 7:44 PM

To: Douglas.Bautista@dtsc.ca.gov

Cc: Tornek, Terry; Mermell, Steve; Masuda, Gene; Angela.Garcia@dtsc.ca.gov;

Tim.Chauvel@dtsc.ca.gov

Subject: 3202 E. Foothill Blvd., Pasadena, CA 91107 – Envirostor ID# 19970020

Douglas Bautista

Department of Toxic Substance Control (DTSC) Cypress Regional Office

5796 Corporate Avenue

Cypress, CA 90630-4732

Re: 3202 E. Foothill Blvd., Pasadena, CA 91107 – Envirostor ID# 19970020

Dear Mr. Bautista:

The neighborhood associations adjacent to the above-referenced location have recently learned that a proposed residential project at the site will be coming before the City Council for review. These groups have serious concerns with the change in use at the location due to the site's history of contamination with known hazardous materials and carcinogenic substances [e.g. Arsenic, Dioxin, Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCB), and Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons (PAHs)]. As concerned citizenry, we want to ensure the property owner, the City of Pasadena, and regulatory agencies exercise their legal and ethical obligations to ensure the site is properly remediated and future uses are appropriate considering the site's past use and contamination history with environmentally persistent chemicals like the Dioxins and PCBs.

As our knowledge and understanding of the health effects caused by environmental pollution improve, we as regulatory agencies, municipalities, and residents must ensure adequate efforts are taken to clean up known contaminated properties and ensure appropriate uses as to protect future generations. For example, it is appropriate to take a commercial property, which as a transient occupancy, and convert it to a residential use with persons of all ages now continuously occupying the site 24 hours per day, 365 days per year? While not a concern or mandate for DTSC, but something to consider, is it in the best interest of the public to place residential units immediately adjacent to freeways now knowing the health hazards caused by exhaust emissions from automobiles and truck traffic (reference UCLA Institute of the Environment and Sustainability – public health studies on transient-related air pollution on neighborhoods).

Before closing, one concern which arose to the residents is how the site, a former federal property operated by the U.S. Navy as a weapons research and testing facility, could be sold to a private entity, Space Bank Limited, 38 years ago; and undergo a change in occupancy use to a commercial property without undertaking any meaningful, permanent site remediation to abate the hazardous contamination? To this day, DTSC records indicate the location remains an active clean up site.

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We hope that DTSC and other relevant regulatory agencies (e.g. CalEPA, Pasadena Public Health, L.A. County Health Hazardous Materials-Site Remediation, etc.), along with the City of Pasadena, undertake the required actions to ensure the site is remediated as required by law as to protect public and environmental health.

Sincerely,

Lee Kirby, M.S., REHS
501 N. Daisy Ave.
Pasadena, CA 91107

Jomsky, Mark

From: Laura Ellersieck <eewna@earthlink.net>
Sent: Sunday, May 15, 2016 5:54 PM
To: Jomsky, Mark
Cc: Masuda, Gene
Subject: PPR for Space Bank property, 3202 E Foothill, item 40 on 5/16 agenda

Honorable Mayor and Council members,

Some questions/comments for your consideration on this item:

1. There does not appear to be any driveway from Kinneloa Ave to the big garage structure along the freeway. Instead the only access appears to be from Foothill. Why? Kinneloa was extended under the freeway at great expense to provide an alternate traffic route, and it was a condition before allowing any more development in the East Pasadena Specific Plan. Now that access is there, and very underutilized. No project could be more ideally located to take advantage than this one. Why force the traffic onto Foothill when many people would go or come from the south via Kinneloa and totally avoid Foothill?

As currently shown, those who wish to leave to the West or arrive from the East during heavy traffic times will need to use the Santa Paula entrance on Foothill to take advantage of the signal there. That will cause that signal to be red for traffic on Foothill a lot more of the time, which will cause even more backing up and issues at the intersections on either side.

Those wanting to leave to the East or arrive from the West during the afternoon/evening backup will have to slog through the Foothill traffic.

2. The Staff Report says the proposed parking would be in excess of zoning code requirements. It only cites the existing TOD requirement and mentions nothing about the proposed revision to relax the maximum around the Sierra Madre Villa station (which is still held up in process by the people who want no parking at all downtown).

How does the proposed parking compare with that potential revision?

My single family neighborhood is directly north of this project and already heavily impacted by the parking of PCC extension students. We are concerned that attempting to force people not to have cars by arbitrarily limiting parking there will further negatively impact our neighborhood. Those residents may well take the train more often than those living further away, but that does not mean they won't still want cars to get to places that aren't convenient to transit. And especially if units get filled by independent adults, they are each likely to have a car. Perhaps some will use Uber type services, but perhaps just as likely, they may be the drivers of such services.

3. The Staff Report says the developer has not decided whether to put the required affordable housing on-site or pay an in-lieu fee.

The Presidents of East Eaton Wash, Daisy Villa, and Lower Hastings Ranch Neighborhood Associations met with the development team in early December and were told they were committed to including the affordable housing on-site and indistinguishable from market rate units. The ideal way to handle it.

Have they changed their minds?

4. I notice that the Staff Report makes absolutely no mention of the known toxic waste issues on the

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site. Or that they already know a full Environmental Impact Report will be required.

5. In December the neighborhood association presidents were told that there would be three stories along Foothill. Maybe there was some fudging going on with retail taking two "stories", and then two residential above that. Not really important since their plans were extremely preliminary then. The point is to avoid a huge vertical edifice at the street edge and instead increase the height more gradually and take advantage of the fact that the land naturally slopes down as you get deeper into the development.

In the Design Commission preliminary consultation on March 22, the developer mentioned they might make the Foothill adjacent buildings average 40' instead of capping at 40'. I agree that some variation in height will probably look better than monolithic, but stepping down the height at the edge adjacent to Foothill should also be a goal.

The Kaiser building is tall, but has extensive landscaping, including large trees, between it and the sidewalk. That softens it a lot.

6. Page 6 of the Staff Report proposes the City Council consider a conversion program wherein the additional enormous commercial square footage allowed in the East Pasadena Specific Plan could be converted into residential units.

Council member Masuda worked hard to scale back the number of residential units in response to what his constituents wanted. In part to preserve areas for business activity. The proposed provision would essentially remove all limits on the amount of residential development and make the distinction a total fiction.

I am opposed to such a provision.

7. The Staff Report at bottom of page 6 has a broken sentence "The design of the project will not to continue evolving to create a village like environment." No idea what was meant.

8. Immediately following on page 6 is "Additional retail/commercial space along Foothill Boulevard and live/work units should not be permitted as they have not been shown to encourage pedestrian activity or add to a village-like environment."

I wonder what is really meant by this.

A Design Commissioner noted in the Preliminary Consultation on March 22 that live/work units just get used as residences unless the area is already heavily used by pedestrians. She suggested just doing retail on the ground floor and separate residential above. But this Staff Report sentence goes beyond that suggestion to say retail/commercial space should not be permitted.

I would think whether retail/commercial space adds to a village-like environment would depend on what service/goods are being provided. That the whole purpose of transit area villages was to have a combination of retail with residences so the residents can get common things/services they need without going far.

9. Middle of page 7, Policy 20.1 - Neighborhood Meetings, says the applicant is "encouraged to meet with surrounding residents and the groups listed under the heading "Neighborhoods" below...". But there is no such heading in this document.

The applicant did reach out to our neighborhoods, but we need to reconnect.

BTW. The planning department rarely sends out the summary of upcoming commission meetings and hearings anymore. We have to scan every possible source of information on the web each week to discover things like the Design Commission meeting. I was unaware of it until I read the Staff Report for your meeting.

10. Middle of page 9, about community space (just above Design Review section). Typo says "500 unit project", but it is a 550 unit project. Total given is the mathematically correct for 550 units.