

**CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED BY
THE PLANNING COMMISSION**

From: The Amsbry's [amsbry@mac.com]
Sent: Thursday, September 25, 2008 8:09 PM
To: Reimers, Scott
Subject: Fwd: Zoning-Higher Density-Safety and Impact On Our Neighborhood

Mr Scott Andrew Reimers,

I am very unhappy to learn that the city wants to increase the number of units from 16 to 24 in the area of Los Robles (both sides) between Mountain and Douglas. I live in Orange Heights and our neighborhood has been working VERY hard to decrease its activity level. I cannot imagine that adding units and turning our area into a high(er) density neighborhood will let us continue down that path. It will not only decrease the safety of our neighborhood but it will also decrease our home values. Do you really want to do that in this day and age? Simply put, I think the last thing that our neighborhood needs is more people.

I thought the city council was working on giving this area a rebirth. Adding high density low income housing is not the answer to that.

Kate Amsbry
1006 N. Oakland Ave
Pasadena, CA 91104

Kate Amsbry
Independent Consultant
Arbonne International
ID #16424892
619-301-2589

Please visit my Leukemia & Lymphoma Society Website and donate TODAY!
<http://pages.teamintraining.org/los/nikesf08/kamsbry>

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http://www.arbonne.com/products/whats_new/index.asp



Jenny Durling

From: De La Cuba, Vannia
Sent: Thursday, September 25, 2008 10:33 PM
To: jenny; sreimers@cityofpadadena.net; Reimers, Scott
Subject: RE: No high density overlay!!!

Scott,

while our office was copied on this email, I believe the sender intended it for you.

I noticed there is an error in your email address as it was written (cityofpadadena). There may be others and I will forward as needed.

vannia

Vannia De La Cuba
Field Representative to Councilmember Victor M. Gordo City of Pasadena - District 5
100 N. Garfield Ave., Suite S228, Pasadena, CA 91109
Tel: (626) 744-4741 or (626) 831-8609
Fax: (626) 398-1836

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

From: jenny [mailto:jenny@jeffdurling.com]
Sent: Thu 9/25/2008 10:25 PM
To: sreimers@cityofpadadena.net
Cc: De La Cuba, Vannia
Subject: No high density overlay!!!

Please do NOT change the zoning of my neighborhood (Los Robles between Mountain and Douglas. Both sides of Los Robles between Mountain and Jackson) to high density. We already have way too many people living in too little space- low income and not. The police department spends entirely too much time hovering their helicopters over our homes as it is. Add more people will only make our issues that much worse and lower the value of our homes.

As a long time resident of this neighborhood, I am concerned about the safety and the quality of life for all residents. When the present number of units per acre is increased. Isn't 16 units per acre enough? Why increase it to 24 units per acre? It seems excessive in an already dense area. I don't think that you would want this for your own neighborhood and neither do I.

The people of Orange Heights would like to preserve and improve our neighborhood rather than fill it with more ugly apartment buildings and excess people. Please don't turn our Historic neighborhood into an overly dense inner city ghetto.

Jenny Durling
499 E. Jackson St
Pasadena, CA 91104

Maya de Leon

From: De La Cuba, Vannia
Sent: Thursday, September 25, 2008 10:38 PM
To: Maya de Leon; sreimers@cityofpadadena.net; Reimers, Scott
Subject: RE: Zoning-Higher Density-Safety and Impact On Our Neighborhood

scott,
here is another with your incorrect email address..
v

Vannia De La Cuba
Field Representative to Councilmember Victor M. Gordo City of Pasadena - District 5
100 N. Garfield Ave., Suite S228, Pasadena, CA 91109
Tel: (626) 744-4741 or (626) 831-8609
Fax: (626) 398-1836

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

From: Maya de Leon [mailto:deleoncervantes443@sbcglobal.net]
Sent: wed 9/24/2008 4:59 PM
To: sreimers@cityofpadadena.net
Cc: De La Cuba, Vannia
Subject: Zoning-Higher Density-Safety and Impact On Our Neighborhood

Dear Mr Scott Andrew Reimers,

It has come to my attention through the neighborhood emails we exchange on the current events that the City of Pasadena is considering changing the Zoning of the area -or proposed overlay on Los Robles between Mountain and Douglas. Both sides of Los Robles between Mountain and Jackson will be affected.

My position is that high density does not make sense environmentally or economically. I question why low income must be always hand in glove with high density. Shouldn't low income live in low density units?? why compound their problems with forcing them into smaller spaces with more people.

As a long time resident of this neighborhood, I am concerned about the safety and the quality of life for all residents. When the present number of units per acre is increased. Isn't 16 units per acre enough? why increase it to 24 units per acre ? It seems excessive in an already dense area.

It is tricky and I understand that all those in city government do the best to make every resident happy. I just want to see my neighborhood preserved and continue to have the Historic Gems it can boast-instead of more apartment buildings. Please put me on your email list and keep me informed on this Overlay matter. I am concerned that this proposal of more units per acre could turn a Historic neighborhood into an overly dense inner city ghetto.

Maya de Leon
993 North Madison Ave.
Pasadena Ca 91104

Denise Mann

From: De La Cuba, Vannia
Sent: Thursday, September 25, 2008 10:39 PM
To: Reimers, Scott
Subject: FW: Zoning-Higher Density-Increasing--Los Robles between Mountain & Douglas

this had your wrong email address

Vannia De La Cuba
Field Representative to Councilmember Victor M. Gordo City of Pasadena - District 5
100 N. Garfield Ave., Suite S228, Pasadena, CA 91109
Tel: (626) 744-4741 or (626) 831-8609
Fax: (626) 398-1836

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

From: Mann, Denise [mailto:DMANN@TFT.UCLA.EDU]
Sent: Thu 9/25/2008 7:18 PM
To: 'sreimers@cityofpadadena.net'
Cc: De La Cuba, Vannia
Subject: Zoning-Higher Density-Increasing--Los Robles between Mountain & Douglas

Dear Mr Scott Andrew Reimers,

Like many of my neighbors who are part of the Orange Heights historical district, I am very disturbed to find out that the City of Pasadena is considering changing the Zoning of the area -or proposed overlay on Los Robles between Mountain and Douglas. Both sides of Los Robles between Mountain and Jackson will be affected.

Like many of my neighbors, we have spent considerable time and effort restoring our historical properties. My house has been featured in the Pasadena Craftsman tour twice since I moved in fourteen years ago. In addition, I was give an award by the Pasadena Historical Restoration committee. We have all made every effort to turn our very cohesive family-oriented neighborhood into a national treasure. The idea that our efforts will be undermined by encouraging developers to destroy valuable historical properties and change the tenor of our community seems to me a serious mistake. I moved to Pasadena because there was a strong emphasis on historical preservation. Old Town Pasadena represents a vital part of this effort and I'm sure has brought considerable money and attention to the City of Pasadena. All of these various efforts will be undermined by encouraging low income developments.

I am a film/TV professor and historian who works at UCLA. I moved to Pasadena, like many of my colleagues in the arts, because of its cultural-historical ambience. Pasadena has many professionals from the entertainment industry, education, museum/cultural affairs. why not make further efforts to encourage this type of community-building rather than invite the type of high density/low-income problems that have negatively impacted other important historical districts of L.A.?

Please put me on your email list and keep me informed on this Overlay matter. Like other members of my neighborhood association, I am concerned that this proposal of more units per acre could turn a Historic neighborhood into an overly dense inner city ghetto.

Denise Mann, Ph.D.
577 E. Jackson Street
Pasadena, CA 91104.

Dorothea Hamilton-John

From: dodie hamilton-john [waldorfmomof2@yahoo.com]
Sent: Saturday, September 27, 2008 8:23 AM
To: Reimers, Scott

September 27, 2008

Dear Mr.Reimers,

It has come to my attention through our Orange Heights neighborhood e-mails, that the City of Pasadena is considering changing the Zoning or creating an overly for Los Robles between Mountain and Douglas. As I understand it, both sides of Los Robles between Mountain and Jackson will be affected.

I have lived in this neighborhood for 21 years now, and I have seen it go from a crack house infested area, with high crime to being a neighborhood of families and children. Those children run up and down the neighborhood streets with little care, and I would hate for their way of life to change.

I am also sick that Pasadena is allowing developers come in and put in these condos and apartment buildings that are visual eye sores, and that cram more and more people into smaller and smaller living environments. I am not in favor of any increase to the density in this area. I am worried about the visual impact that this will have on our neighborhood; in addition to the potential for higher crime and traffic.

We are an historic neighborhood, with beautiful houses that we have worked hard to restore. Please do not let historic Pasadena become a site for low income apartments, or apartment buildings at all for that matter. Please put me on your email list and keep me informed on this overlay matter. I am concerned that this proposal of more units per acre could turn a Historic neighborhood into an overly dense inner city ghetto.

sincerely,

Dorothea Hamilton-John

Robert Crook

From: robert crook [robertasa@earthlink.net]
Sent: Sunday, September 28, 2008 11:46 PM
To: Reimers, Scott
Cc: McIntyre, Jacqueline; Kent, Judy; De La Cuba, Vannia;
bcm@kpclegal.com; rdb@kpclegal.com; holden88@msn.com;
orangeheights@paque.com; Melekian, Bernard; Pastucha, Martin;
News.star-news@sgvn.com; frank.pine@sgvn.com; hector.gonzalez@sgvn.com
Subject: Misguided proposed rezoning of Los Robles from Mountain to
Douglas Streets

Scott Andrew Reimers,
City of Pasadena

Mr. Reimers,

I am a homeowner whose home runs along, and in back of, the former corridor on Los Robles which was corrected in 2006 to reflect the zoning along the rest of Los Robles (which is R16). I have been informed by my neighbor that a meeting took place on September 23, 2008 in which you announced the proposed rezoning of this portion of Los Robles to R24. This is unacceptable.

Under the proposed rezoning, the only purpose of which would be to demolish five existing structures, the City would acquiesce to the threat of a disgruntled developer who has previously been told through fair and well-attended proceedings that the corridor cannot be used as a dumping ground for oversized structures that would destroy existing historical buildings and would burden already taxed parking and other facilities in the area.

From what I understand, the City is considering the change in response to this developers' lawsuit or threatened lawsuit in response to the correction in May 2006 in which the City determined that the existing structures and the zoning in the area were properly R16, and not R24, and that it would be best for the neighborhood if the zoning correctly reflected the realities of the corridor that ran between Mountain on the south side and Douglas on the north side. Under the guise of providing low income housing, the developer is intent on obtaining certain variances in terms of height, width, setbacks, and parking.

I understand that at the meeting you characterized that only 5 properties in this corridor would be immediately affected by this rezoning. However, those structures are well-tended, and three of the five were clearly built in the Craftsman time period and are deserving of historic protection if they do not have such protection at this time. Although specific addresses were not listed, the "Zone Change Study" reflects that 972 North Los Robles would be among those buildings that would be demolished and replaced with a big ugly box. My home shares a corner with 972 North Los Robles, so I take particular exception to this misguided rezoning which could add an additional 70+ units into the already tight and taxed housing in the area. If I am misinformed, please correct me, because the consequences of this proposal are alarming.

I have further come to learn that under the proposed rezoning this developer, or another, could purchase adjoining parcels turning them into mega-developments, displacing current residents, many of whom are low income.

As someone immediately affected, I am unequivocally opposed to the rezoning.

Robert Crook
987 North Oakland Avenue

From: sam alexander [popsalexander44@yahoo.com]

Sent: Monday, September 29, 2008 12:06 PM

To: Reimers, Scott

Cc: news@sgvn.com; Kent, Judy; De La Cuba, Vannia; Pastucha, Martin; holden88@msn.com; agmelich@whopper.com; barbara_ciolino@yahoo.com; ben porter; deidre washington; robert cook; mrhmold@dslextre.me.com

Subject: Propose Rejoining Of Los Robles

Mr. Ramirez I am a concern home owner in close proximity to Los Robles. I live on Jackson street. It seems to me as strict as the City Of Pasadena is to home owners on what they can and can not do to their property, in order to uphold the integrity of the city, how can this be on the table? You want to rezone r16 to r24, Why would you want to increase the density on Los Robles? What leverage does this developer have on the City Of Pasadena for you to even consider this proposal? What control would you have on how many people would be in each apartment? I am very concern and not for this proposal!

Michael Heather

From: Michael Heather [mrhmold@dslextre.me.com]

Sent: Monday, September 29, 2008 3:00 PM

To: Reimers, Scott

Cc: robert crook; bcm@kpclegal.com; De La Cuba, Vannia; Pastucha,

Martin; News.star-news@sgvn.com; Kent, Judy; frank.pine@sgvn.com;

orangeheights@paque.com; hector.gonzalez@sgvn.com; McIntyre, Jacqueline;

Melekian, Bernard

Subject: [OrangeHeights] Misguided proposed OVERLAY ZONE of Los Robles
from Mountain to Douglas Streets

29 September 2008

Mr. Reimers,

At a neighborhood association meeting last night, I was informed that the city is considering the proposed overlay of an R16 zone on N. Los Robles with R24. If this is true, it should be noted that the affected area is part of an historic district on the national register, and may affect contributing structures.

I was also informed that this notice of opposition to you needed to be in writing. If an email is insufficient, I would appreciate the courtesy of a response including the correct complete address to which I should mail my objection to this proposition.

It is deeply disturbing to a native (4th generation) of Pasadena to hear that the city may be buckling to developer pressure, characterized rightly or not as extortion. This city has a proud history and culture of providing unique family residences in many styles and prices, including the highly prized and increasingly rare craftsman and California bungalow. My great Grandfather built some of the structures in the neighborhood affected in 1898-1930. To consider an overlay zone in an area like this, already highly impacted with high density structures of increasingly feeble design and construction is not only thoughtless, but reckless. If this abomination were to pass, it would forever erase one or more precious family homes upon which the good name of Pasadena was built and depends for its identity. One needs only to look at Glendale, Downey or Pomona to see the tremendous damage this kind of city bureau indifference can inflict.

I am not only in opposition to this proposed overlay, I am insulted that it is even being considered by the same people who are paid to nurture and protect the architectural health of the city.

Michael Heather
957 N. El Molino Ave.
Pasadena, CA 91104

1469 W. Marshall Blvd.
San Bernardino, CA 92405
October 5, 2008

City of Pasadena
Planning and Development Dept.
175 N. Garfield Ave., Pasadena, CA 91101

RE: Proposed Zoning Change, Los Robles Ave.

To Whom It May Concern:

I own the property at 1140 N. Los Robles Ave. I have six units, which were built in 1949. My property is not included but directly across the street from your proposed change. I have owned this property for eight years. I purchased it in 2000 as I was planning to retire the following year. I used every cent that I received from the sale of my single family home in Claremont. This was necessitated by discovering while planning my retirement in 2001 at age 65, that despite the fact that I had paid into Social Security and Self Employment Insurance my entire life, I was now going to receive slightly over \$500.00 per month. I was unable to ascertain whether this was due to an error made by my own accountant, who had since died, or an error within the Social Security Agency. The bottom line was I could not afford to pay the property taxes and insurance on a home that was free and clear. I have been living off of the income from this property since my retirement.

Still I have gone without to improve the property and at the same time keep my rents low for the area. For instance I still drive a 1997 Jeep. There are so many reasons to not bring low-income property to Pasadena that I anticipate it will be difficult to keep this letter succinct.

First, from a personal standpoint I will not be able to compete, rent wise, with new buildings and ridiculously low rents.

Secondly, in the eight years that I've owned property and lived in this neighborhood, I have seen tremendous improvements in the immediate area both demographically and its' appearance. This has been almost solely attributable to the efforts of the citizens that reside here and not the city. Your proposal will not only lower the demographics of the area, but also bring undesirables into it. There is no way to have large high-density residential income buildings without making exceptions to your own parking specifications. This translates to every street in the area being saturated with bumper to bumper parked cars. This exacerbates the existing problem of narrow streets. When I actually lived in the property, 2000-2005, I felt the inconvenience of driving on the streets as they currently exist was offset by my belief that the City wanted to preserve the old and control any different land usage. With a cooperative attitude and believing the city would only support positive growth, I lived on a residential street that was used as a major thoroughfare with little or no enforcement of traffic laws. I can only imagine that your proposed change will not only increase traffic threefold, and do excessive damage to outdated streets, but moreover bring in street racing, cruising, and other gang related activity.

Thirdly, as a Real Estate Broker for some 30 years, I have seen the overall picture and consequences to each and every City that has allowed, or worse, invited low income housing to be built in their city. It starts by many citizens becoming fearful and selling their homes and property even at a loss. After this the homes are purchased by, or rented to individuals in a lower demographic stratum. This downward spiral continues until after a few years the medium income of the area prohibits the residents from paying taxes. If the

preponderance of the residents do not pay taxes, the City has to continually redo the budget in accordance with the revenue. The City eventually has to not only cut programs, but also withhold needed street repairs. Relatively soon after the budget cannot maintain the same number of Police Officers. I don't think I need to say, the fewer the Police Officers, the worse the existing problems become.

What Pasadena needs is actually the opposite of what is being proposed. Pasadena needs to once again cater to the upper middle class professional. I think if you look at the converse of my arguments against you will readily see this as a truism. Of course Pasadena can ignore these lofty pursuits, leaving them to South Pasadena and Altadena, once again just being that slum between the two.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Elaine Attaway". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned to the right of the typed name.

Elaine Attaway

cc

Mayor Bill Bogaard

Pasadena City Counsel, at large

C.R.A.S.H.

Mr. Dan Stark

Congresswoman Linda Sanchez

Congressman Adam Schiff

1240 N. Los Robles Ave.
Pasadena, CA 91104-2814

October 14, 2008

Dear Members of the City Council,

Subject: Re-zoning on Los Robles

Jim and I are home owners who live on Los Robles. We are taking the time to write to explain why we are against a re-zoning effort on Los Robles.

We understand that this matter has resurfaced due to a lawsuit against the City of Pasadena, where the City agreed to conduct an Impact Study. The study, as you know, found that raising the zoning "could not have a significant effect on the environment". We disagree strongly with this finding.

My husband and I feel that allowing lots to be developed with more units, will not only harm the character of our neighborhood, but additionally increase traffic, pollution, pedestrian and cyclist danger. Here are other reasons we are opposed to this rezoning:

- The Master Plan of Pasadena has a limit of 16 units/acre for all of Pasadena. Why should our Northwest neighborhood be allowed a higher density?
- There is an implication that there is no affordable housing available, and that is why this area should be developed. If this is true, then the City should study what type of housing is already there, otherwise we may actually be loosing affordable housing units. Until the City undertakes such a study, we should not allow further development on Los Robles.
- Because of it's beautiful architectural heritage, Pasadena is concerned with aesthetics. New developments have strict building codes so they fit with the aesthetic character of Pasadena's neighborhood. However, new developments including affordable housing are allowed waivers to many aesthetic building codes. Therefore, any subsequent projects would likely not match our neighborhood which presently accommodates many historic small apartments complexes, duplexes and historic houses.
- Los Robles is considered a major transportation artery. If we build more units on Los Robles, then this major artery will become blocked. There is a bus line running the length of the street. More traffic means more danger to pedestrians and cyclists and constant traffic congestion.
- It goes almost without saying, noise and air pollution would increase with increased density. We are unsure of the criteria with which the City measured this in the Impact Study, but we would like an outside neutral expert to review the plan and conduct a more thorough examination.

In a nutshell, we like the ethnic and economic diversity our neighborhood has. We believe the character of our neighborhood would be changed dramatically by the addition of more units on Los Robles. The developer who sued the City has put together a group called "Affordable Pasadena Housing in Distress". Creating a perception that there is no low income housing in Pasadena, he hopes to buy property, have a couple affordable units and sell the others units for an exorbitant amount. The developer, Mr. Winter, is doing this for his personal financial benefit, as the 'affordable' units will only remain so for certain amount of years and then be sold or rented at market rate. We hope you will not be taken in by his unfounded presumptions and that you will vote against this re-zoning effort.

Respectfully,
Ms. Cybele Garcia Kohel & Dr. James M. Kohel
(626) 398-1855

From: Denise Seider [dkseider@sbcglobal.net]
Sent: Thursday, October 16, 2008 2:32 PM
To: Reimers, Scott
Cc: cybelegarcia@me.com; McIntyre, Jacqueline
Subject: Re-Zoning of N. Los Robles between Douglas and Mountain

Dear Mr. Reimers,

Please accept this letter as an official protest against the re-zoning of N. Los Robles between Douglas and Mountain.

To say that this re-zoning will have no effect on our neighborhood is absurd. The elements of noise, traffic congestion and the eroding of the character of our neighborhood will be significant if this development is allowed. While I support low-income housing, this is not an appropriate place for it. Having lived in Garfield Heights, a Historic Landmark District, for 15 years, I have seen the slow but steady improvement of conditions here. This has not been accomplished easily or by tearing down housing or by the converting of existing housing to include more cheaply constructed developments. It has been achieved through historic renovations and raising residents' awareness of the historic significance of our homes.

The fact that this low-income housing will be converted to market-value residences in a few years makes this matter even more disconcerting. It is not a long-term solution for anyone but the developer, who stands to gain the most from this travesty.

Developments in this neighborhood, such as the one at the corner of Los Robles and Orange Grove, have only served to corrupt the character of our community and I have no doubt that developments further north on Los Robles will do the same.

I would also ask the City to consider building such developments in neighborhoods with different demographics. Let's see some low-income housing go up in the district south of California and Lake, or how about in the San Rafael hills? The residents of Garfield Heights, Orange Heights - Barnhart and other sections of this area care just as much about our living conditions as do the folks of those neighborhoods.

I would appreciate a reply to acknowledge your receipt of this correspondence.

Sincerely,

Denise K. Seider

Cell: (323) 868-0314

From: Robert Tait [rjtait@charter.net]
Sent: Monday, October 20, 2008 2:07 PM
To: Reimers, Scott
Cc: Gordo, Victor; Vannia De La Cuba
Subject: Re: Comments on Proposed Negative Declaration for "Proposed Zoning Map and Zoning Code Amendments to N. Los Robles Ave. between Douglas St. and Mountain St."
Scott:

Thank you for responding to my comments in a timely fashion. I now have a better understanding of the City's approach to the environmental study of this area, and I would like to withdraw the objections that I stated in my message of 10/12/2008, below. I have also gained a more complete understanding of the legal settlement issues that led to the proposed amendment to the zoning code. I will now be supporting the proposed amendment, and I intend to explain my change in position to a number of my friends and neighbors who still oppose the amendment due to a faulty understanding of the situation.

Robert J. Tait

On Oct 16, 2008, at 11:35 AM, Reimers, Scott wrote:

Mr. Tait,

As provided in State CEQA Guidelines Section 15168, the 2004 General Plan EIR is a program level EIR, which analyzed the general programs and policies set forth in the General Plan, including the potential land use development patterns in the area analyzed in this ND. Consistent with CEQA's goals and policies of disclosure, its purpose "not generate paper" (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15003(g)), and the concept of tiering and incorporation by reference in order to eliminate repetitive discussion (State CEQA Guidelines Sections 15150, 15152, 15168), the City used the 2004 GP EIR as the starting point for the ND, as this zone change is but the next, more detailed, step in the land use planning for the affected area. In regards to the age of the 2004 GP EIR, EIRs do not have set shelf lives, and it is up to every lead agency to determine whether the analysis in an EIR is still relevant, or requires further supplementation. As a standard for that measure, the City used State CEQA Guidelines Section 15162's structure to ask the questions whether (1) there had been substantial changes with respect to the circumstances in the area, or (2) there was new information of substantial importance which was not known and could not have been known with the exercise or reasonable diligence, in deciding whether it was appropriate for the City to tier off of the 2004 GP EIR. The development patterns and traffic patterns in the affected area have not deviated from what was anticipated, and planned for, in the 2004 GP EIR, and therefore the analysis in the 2004 GP EIR remains adequate and representative of current on-the-ground conditions. (See Initial Study, pp. 31-32.) More importantly, the 2004 GP, and the 2004 GP EIR, anticipated that this area would remain zoned for medium-density residential (32 units/acre). (Ibid.) The downzoning that took place in 2006 (low density residential (16 units/acre)), and now the proposed affordable housing higher density overlay (22 units/acre), result in less dense development in the area than was planned for in the 2004 GP and analyzed in the 2004 GP EIR. As a result, further analysis of what was already analyzed in the 2004 GP EIR would only serve to "generate paper."

While the you suggest that the analysis methodology undertaken by the City is flawed, the you do not identify any specific impacts, or even impact categories, that could be affected by the project, other than the issue of potential traffic problems that exist as part of the baseline conditions in the area (as addressed below). As such, the City is unaware of any potential incorrect impact conclusions made in the Initial Study as you suggested.

In regards to the traffic issue raised by the commenter, no development project is proposed in this action, and thus the existing baseline will not change. Your claims that the City possesses site-specific information, which is incorrect since the City does not have on file any development applications for this area. Accordingly, the City does not know, and could not know, the density of any hypothetical potential future project, or the parking requirements or potential traffic patterns that may arise from any such project, and therefore appropriately deferred project level analysis until an actual development project is before the City. Only at that time will the City have the legal authority to impose mitigation measures to reduce that as-yet hypothetical project's impacts on traffic. In any event, the City is not required to mitigate existing baseline traffic through the CEQA process (and, in addition, is without the legal authority to impose mitigation measures to alleviate existing baseline traffic on the back of a development project).

Thank you for your comment on the environmental document. It will be placed in the Commission's packet with this response.

Many Thanks,

Scott

Phone (626) 744-6710

From: Robert Tait [mailto:rjtait@charter.net]

Sent: Sunday, October 12, 2008 2:57 PM

To: Reimers, Scott

Cc: Gordo, Victor; 'Vannia De La Cuba'

Subject: Comments on Proposed Negative Declaration for "Proposed Zoning Map and Zoning Code Amendments to N. Los Robles Ave. between Douglas St. and Mountain St."

Scott:

I have some comments on the Negative Declaration named above. To place my comments in a little perspective, let me first tell you a little about my background and experience in environmental work.

Robert J. Tait, Ph.D.

B.S. in Engineering (Cal Tech)

M.S. in Geology (Cal Tech)

Ph.D. in Coastal Geology (UC San Diego)

Professional Geologist (CA License #4417)

More than 30 years experience as an Environmental Geologist, specializing in environmental investigation and analysis.

Resident of northwest Pasadena, walking my dog through the area under discussion about three times a week for the last six years (usually in the morning during rush hour traffic).

In my opinion, there are two major issues that cast doubt on the validity and conclusions of the Proposed Negative Declaration.

1. I believe that the analysis methodology is flawed and inadequate.
2. It appears to me that the conclusions reached are unsupported.

First, the methodology:

- a. At least 23 subsections defer impact analysis to specific future project reviews and this deference is concluded to mean that the zoning change will have no impacts related to the issues of these subsections. This is an unnecessary dodging of the issues involved in this proposed action and could be quite wrong. The numbers for a worst case scenario are already in the document. As many as 71 additional housing units could be constructed in this three-block stretch of Los Robles, resulting in approximately 180 additional residents at an average occupation density of 2.5 residents per unit.

- b. Extensive use (13 sections) is made of the 2004 EIR to conclude that there are no impacts or less than significant impacts to the specific area in this rezoning proposal.

While this reliance on a prior analysis for a larger area is sometimes useful, it must be both timely and an accurate representation. Also, it should not be done if site-specific information is available. All of these three conditions are violated here. Timeliness - The document is four years old and the basis of its analysis was a zoning density that was subsequently changed to a lower value. Accurate representation - This rezoning could result in a 71% increase in housing units in a three-block stretch of a street that is already a heavily travelled transportation corridor. The 2004 EIR certainly does not represent the larger area of its analysis to have these specific characteristics. Availability of site-specific information - A significant amount of this information is presented in the document, and more is likely to be available or easily collected. It should be used.

Second, the Conclusions

No impact, or less than significant impact is concluded for all elements of the analysis.

To begin, it appears that the analysis was based on flawed methodology and inappropriate use of older, wider-ranging documentation as suggested above.

In addition, the document fails what we often call "the Giggie Test". Allowing up to a 71 % increase in housing units with the resulting 180 additional people in a three-block section of a busy transportation corridor has got to have some impacts. For example, at the present time, during the morning rush hours, it is interesting to watch people trying to get their cars out of their driveways as heavy traffic flows down the hill. For a "traffic corridor", having only one lane in either direction it is already presenting a difficult situation. That is only one facet of a significant potential change in the area. Project this population size change onto other issues and calculate the results.

Recommendation - TRY AGAIN, with an appropriate, site-specific data set.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of my thoughts on this issue.

Robert J. Tait

RECEIVED OCT 20 2008



Orange Heights Neighborhood Association
968 N Madison Avenue
Pasadena, CA 91104

Mr. Scott Reimers
City of Pasadena
Planning Division 175 N. Garfield Avenue
Pasadena, California 91101

October 13, 2008

Re: Proposed Negative Declaration/Proposed Zoning Map and Zoning
Code Amendments to N. Los Robles Avenue

Dear Mr. Reimers,

I am writing to you on the behalf of the Orange Heights Neighborhood Association. As you know Orange Heights is a recognized historic district with the National Registry of Historic Places. We have reviewed your office's Proposed Negative Declaration regarding the Proposed Zoning and Zoning Code Amendments for North Los Robles Ave. between Douglas and Mountain Streets. We have significant questions and concerns about the proposed zoning overlay that have not been addressed in your report. We are particularly concerning with how the proposed change may adversely impact housing density, the historic nature of our neighborhood, the quality and type of construction that could be built, and the effect this will have on the quality of life in our neighborhood as well as property values.

In way of general remarks, we find your findings to be less than a ringing endorsement of the proposed change. The study fails to identify the possible *benefits* this proposed change will bestow on the current residents of Los Robles or on the surrounding areas. In fact, it is hard to fathom how an increased density of 50% could possibly benefit the neighboring areas in terms of safety, aesthetics and environment.

The study is unclear as to its actual subject. Is the subject of the study the possible parcels identified on the "Los Robles Zone Change Study" i.e. those the Planning Division marked as tan or of all possible parcels. Please clarify at the October 22, 2008 meeting.

Lastly, in way of general remarks, the purpose of the September 23, 2008 meeting you held was to discuss the study "in response to a court settlement." Questions regarding the settlement's terms should have been anticipated by the City. The City, however, was only able to provide those attendees with vague outlines. To fully understand the

parameters of the study, we ask that the terms of the underlying court ruling and the proposed settlement be explained to the attendees at the October 22, 2008 meeting.

Regarding "Aesthetics," please explain, in layman's terms and without citation to code sections, the "existing regulations" that will ensure that projects using the provisions of this overlay will not cause *significant* aesthetic impact. Please identify what the City views as "significant." How will the change improve the aesthetics and encourage foot traffic?

Please explain how these "existing regulations" will work in tandem with zoning variances that may be available to developers of low income housing?

The City did not factor in the projects' proximity to historic landmark district Garfield Heights, and historical landmark districts Orange Heights and Normandie Heights. Residents of these districts, as well as individuals who fall outside of these districts, have invested heavily into their neighborhoods in an attempt to beautify their neighborhoods and increase safety. How would this change of increased population and attendant increased noise, traffic and trash induce others to invest in their homes and neighborhood in these hard economic times?

We are concerned this zoning change may cause developers, looking to turn a quick profit, to build cheap and ill conceived buildings i.e. eyesores that currently exist in parts of the Northwest District. We do not want Los Robles north of Mountain to look like Los Robles south of Orange Grove. In times of economic downturn, the City needs to be vigilant against predatory developers. We find the proposed increase of 50% density to be alarming. Over the last couple of years a number of homes on Los Robles have been restored and some converted back to their single family dwelling configuration. Our concern is that this proposed zoning amendment will discourage further rehabilitations and set the clock back on Los Robles.

Regarding Population and Housing, the study is based on a 2000 Census of "average household size," and on that basis assumes that each unit would house 2.51 persons. We believe this standard to be flawed. Instead of "average household size" the city should utilize an average moderate and average low income size. Moderately and low income families are more likely to be multi-generational and therefore larger. On a related note, while there seems to be safeguard dictating how many units are in place, there seems to be no related safeguards in terms of how many people are in a unit. We believe the anticipated increase of 178 people, while large for the area under study, is nevertheless an underestimate.

The study does not address the number of current low income residents who will be displaced by the proposed project or the units currently existing that already provide lower than market rents.

On the bottom of page 26 is the following, "The proposed amendments will decrease the density from the previous analyzed levels and thus lessen the impacts already analyzed." Please explain how a decrease will occur when the proposed amendment could allow for a low estimate of 427 people at a net low estimate increase of 178?

Regarding traffic, again, the study speaks of units not people or cars. The study does not address how parking may be affected by variances provided to low income developers. The study does not address the affect of the increased traffic on encouraging bike riding.

With regard to paragraph 18.f, the first sentence is incomprehensible. The sentence reads: "The proposed zone change would not directly create any structure and therefore would not create a need for additional parking." Please explain. Presumably structures will be built in which people with cars will move. Also, please explain the "waivers" future projects could receive from zoning code standards.

Other issues which we do not believe were adequately addressed include the effects the increased density will have on public services such as police and fire, increase in crime and graffiti, trash collection, damage to the old growth oak trees that line the street, and the increased burden on our aging sewer and water systems.

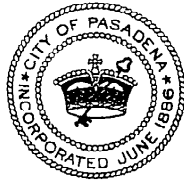
We look forward to your response at the upcoming meeting.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alisa Gmclich". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letter 'A' being particularly large and stylized.

Alisa Gmclich

cc: Charles Nelson, Northwest
Council Members: Jacque Robinson, Margaret McAustin, Chris Holden, Steve Haderlein,
Victor Gordo, Steve Madison, and Sid Tyler



PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
PLANNING DIVISION

October 22, 2008

Alisa Gmelich
Orange Heights Neighborhood Association
968 North Madison Avenue
Pasadena, CA 91104

RE: Proposed Negative Declaration/Proposed Zoning Map and Zoning Code Amendments to
N. Los Robles Avenue

Dear Ms. Gmelich:

Thank you for your letter regarding the proposed zone change along N. Los Robles Ave. and the accompanying negative declaration (ND) of environmental impacts and environmental initial study. I appreciate the time and energy the Orange Heights Neighborhood Association has invested in reviewing the environmental documents and attending meetings. We will be providing your letter and our response to the Planning Commission for their information. Below, in italics, are the particular issues raised in your letter followed by staff's response.

"We find your findings to be less than a ringing endorsement... The study fails to identify the possible benefits..."
As required by CEQA, the purpose of the environmental documents which you reviewed is not to endorse or advocate a certain action or to identify possible benefits. Their purpose is to disclose whether adopting the project – in this case the zoning changes – may have a significant adverse environmental effect on the environment. For that reason, they tend to portray a "worst case scenario," as opposed to espousing "possible benefits." For a clearer understanding of the reasons behind staff's support of this zone change please see the staff report, on the Planning Commission's website <http://www.ci.pasadena.ca.us/planning/meetings/notices.asp>. For your convenience, the following is a summary of the benefits of this zone change: the provision of additional covenanted affordable housing units, reinvestment in the neighborhood, design review of changes to structures in which multi-family development will occur, and increased tax revenue and impact fees.

"The study is unclear as to its actual subject..."

The proposed overlay district would be applicable only to the properties that are colored in the attached map, or please see pages one and two of the initial study for a map and description of the zone change area. Generally, these are the parcels fronting N. Los Robles Ave. between E. Mountain St. and Douglas St. on the west side of N. Los Robles Ave. and between E. Mountain St. and Jackson St. on the east side of N. Los Robles Ave.

"We ask that the terms of the underlying court ruling and the proposed settlement be explained..."

The trial court ruled that the previously adopted workforce/affordable housing overlay conflicted with state law meant to encourage the development of affordable housing, and for that reason was preempted by state law. The City Attorney's Office will have an attorney present at the Planning Commission Meeting on October 22 to answer questions regarding the legal matter behind this case. For a copy of the Court's decision or the settlement agreement you may contact the City Clerk's Office and submit a public records request.

"Please explain...the 'existing regulations' that will ensure that projects...will not cause a significant aesthetic impact."

The proposed overlay will maintain the RM-16 base zoning. Multi-family development in the RM-16 zone (including the proposed overlay) is subject to the City of Gardens ordinance. The City of Gardens multi-family development standards address setbacks, height, and mass of multi-family structures when adjacent to single family zoned properties, reducing potential impacts on the neighborhood character. The regulations require additional setbacks. For instance, the rear setback for a multi-family building is 5 feet for the first story, 15 feet for the second story, and 25 feet for the third story. In addition to those provisions, the following is a sample of other requirements that would help mitigate possible aesthetic impacts.

- Building entrances are required to orient to the street.
- Views from the street into the central garden are required.

In addition, multi-family projects utilizing the benefits of this proposed overlay will be subject to adopted design guidelines and will undergo design review. The combination of these existing regulations will act to insure that projects will not cause a significant aesthetic impact.

The City is in the process of updating the design guidelines for multi-family zones. You are most certainly welcome to provide input. The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for November 11 with the Design Commission. You can follow the status of the design guidelines by visiting the following: <http://www.cityofpasadena.net/planning/deptorg/dhp/Guidelines/designguidelines.asp>

"Please explain how these 'existing regulations' will work in tandem with zoning variances..."

In accordance with the State of California Density Bonus Law, developments that comply with the State's density bonus law can apply for an Affordable Housing Concession Permit. The concession permit can provide relief from some development standards, including the City of Gardens development standards. This is true not only within the proposed overlay zoning district but within any zoning district in the City or State. However, as is previously noted, multi-family projects require review by the Design Commission or Staff. Either one would require project revisions to lessen potential aesthetic impacts as long as they do not impinge on the rights provided to developers under the State's density bonus law. This zone change study does not propose a specific development project, nor has the City received an application to construct a multi-family development within the study area. Therefore, an in depth analysis of the aesthetic impacts of a specific project in the area cannot be analyzed until an actual development project application is submitted.

"How would this change...induce others to invest in their homes and neighborhood...?"

The Initial Study on pages 12 & 13 concludes that existing City regulations, like the Historic Preservation Ordinance, would protect historic resources, like landmark districts, from the impacts associated with new development. New, well designed projects in combination with historically

accurate and well designed refurbishment of historic homes could produce added investment in the neighborhood.

"We do not want Los Robles north of Mountain to look like Los Robles South of Orange Grove..."

The zoning for the west side of N. Los Robles Ave. south of Orange Grove Blvd. is RM-16 and the area on the east side of N. Los Robles is RM-32. The vast majority of structures on this portion of N. Los Robles Ave. were built prior to adoption of the City of Gardens standards. Therefore, development on the portion of N. Los Robles subject to the overlay would be remarkably different than the developments south of Orange Grove Blvd. The proposed overlay would keep the present RM-16 zoning. It would allow, in cases where affordable housing is provided, a density increase up to 24 units/acre. However, the City of Gardens development standards would still apply to this overlay area.

"Instead of 'average household size' the city should utilize an average moderate and average low income size."

Use of this zoning overlay would require a developer to provide a maximum of 17-36% of the units at affordable rates. A developer could provide the remainder of the units at market rates. Since the proposed developments would likely include a mixture of market rate and affordable units and the average household size in the 2000 Census included families of different income categories. Therefore, we believe that the use of average household size from Census data is applicable. Data on the size of households based on income level is not readily available and using such a figure for every unit of every development would be an inappropriate application of such data.

"The study does not include the number of current low income residents who will be displaced..."

Please see pages 26 & 27 of the Initial Study which acknowledge that displacement of existing residents might occur. Figures relating to the number and income of potential displacees are very elusive and would be very difficult to obtain. The definition of low income takes into account the number of bedrooms and the cost of rent, or the number of people in each unit and the household income. Staff prepared the Negative Declaration and Environmental Initial Study in compliance with the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act which requires review of physical impacts to the environment, and prohibits the analysis of social or economic impacts unless they directly result in an environmental effect.

"Please explain how a decrease will occur when the proposed amendment could allow for a low estimate of 427 people at a net low estimate increase of 178."

The determination that the overlay will decrease density must be considered within the context of the higher density allowed by the prior zoning designation (RM-32) for this area. The paragraph in which this sentence is found incorporates the 2004 Land Use Element and the accompanying Environmental Impact Report (EIR). CEQA allows environmental assessments to refer back to and rely on analysis and decisions on previous environmental documents, a technique called "tiering." The 2004 Land Use Element set a density of 32 units/acre for this area of N. Los Robles Ave. The accompanying EIR reviewed the impacts of the 32 unit/acre density and found no significant impact – please see the paragraph at the top of page 27 of the Initial Study for a description of how that decision was reached. This comment made at the bottom of page 26 tiers off the original EIR and says that if that environmental document found no significant impact at a density of 32 units/acre, then a density lower than that would also have no significant impact.

"The study does not address how parking may be affected by variances provided to low income developers."

This document is intended to review the environmental impacts of the proposed overlay district and the corresponding zoning code amendment; it does not and cannot review, the impacts of a specific development or of the concessions, like parking, which are already provided by the State Density Bonus Law. It would be too speculative to review the impacts of a development project that has not been submitted. The City has received two Affordable Housing Concession Permits, none of which sought modifications to the parking standards.

"The study does not address the affect of the increased traffic on encouraging bike riding."

In order to determine specific impacts of vehicular traffic on other modes of transit it is necessary to have a specific project to review. Determination of potential impacts will occur with specific proposals for development.

"With regard to paragraph 18.f, the first sentence is incomprehensible."

The purpose of this sentence is to say that the proposal is a zone change; not an application to construct a building. Since the City has not received an application to construct a specific development, building, or site improvement specific analysis can not be provided and would be too speculative. Until somebody submits an application to construct a building, specific impacts cannot be analyzed.

"Please explain the 'waivers' future projects could receive from zoning code standards."

The State density bonus law provides for concessions, incentives and waivers. The definition provided for in section 17.43 of the zoning code states, "Concessions or other incentives include a reduction in a site development standard or modification of another Zoning Code requirement..." The zoning code provides the following definition of development standard, "For purposes of this chapter, a development standard includes a site or construction condition that applies to a residential development pursuant to any ordinance, general plan element, specific plan, charter amendment, or other local condition, law, policy, resolution, or regulation. A development standard subject to waiver does not include additional density beyond that allowed in this Chapter." Waivers, concessions, and incentives could include such development standards such as height, setback, central garden standards, and parking. Density over that allowed by State density bonus law can not be granted as a concession, incentive, or waiver. If you would like to review the City's zoning code, you can do so by visiting <http://www.cityofpasadena.net/zoning/index.html>.

"Other issues which we do not believe were adequately addressed include the effects the increase density will have on public services...increase in crime and graffiti, trash collection, damage to...oak trees...and...sewer and water systems."

Please see page 27 of the initial study which discusses potential impacts to public. Consistent with CEQA's goals and policies of disclosure (State CEQA Guidelines Sections 15003(g), 15150, 15152, 15168), the City used the 2004 GP EIR as the starting point for the ND, as this zone change is but the next, more detailed step in the land use planning for the affected area. The development patterns, traffic patterns, and levels of public services in the affected area have not deviated from what was anticipated, and planned for, in the 2004 GP EIR, and therefore the analysis in the 2004 GP EIR remains adequate and representative of current on-the-ground conditions. More importantly; the 2004 GP, and the 2004 GP EIR, anticipated that this area would remain zoned for medium-density residential (32 units/acre). The downzoning that took place in 2006 (low density residential (16 units/acre)), and now the proposed affordable housing higher density overlay (22 units/acre), result in less dense development in the area than was planned for in the 2004 GP and analyzed in the 2004 GP EIR. As a result, further analysis of what was already analyzed in the 2004

GP EIR would only serve to “generate paper” and by incorporating relevant portions of the 2004 GP EIR into the initial study, the City has adequately analyzed the potential environmental effects of the overlay. Please submit any evidence or facts regarding impacts to trees, sewer, or water so that staff can incorporate these within the environmental document.

I will gladly place your letter and this response in the project file and provide copies to the Planning Commission. I look forward to answering any further questions that you might have or receive any further comments. Feel free to contact me at 626-744-6710 or e-mail me at sreimers@cityofpasadena.net.

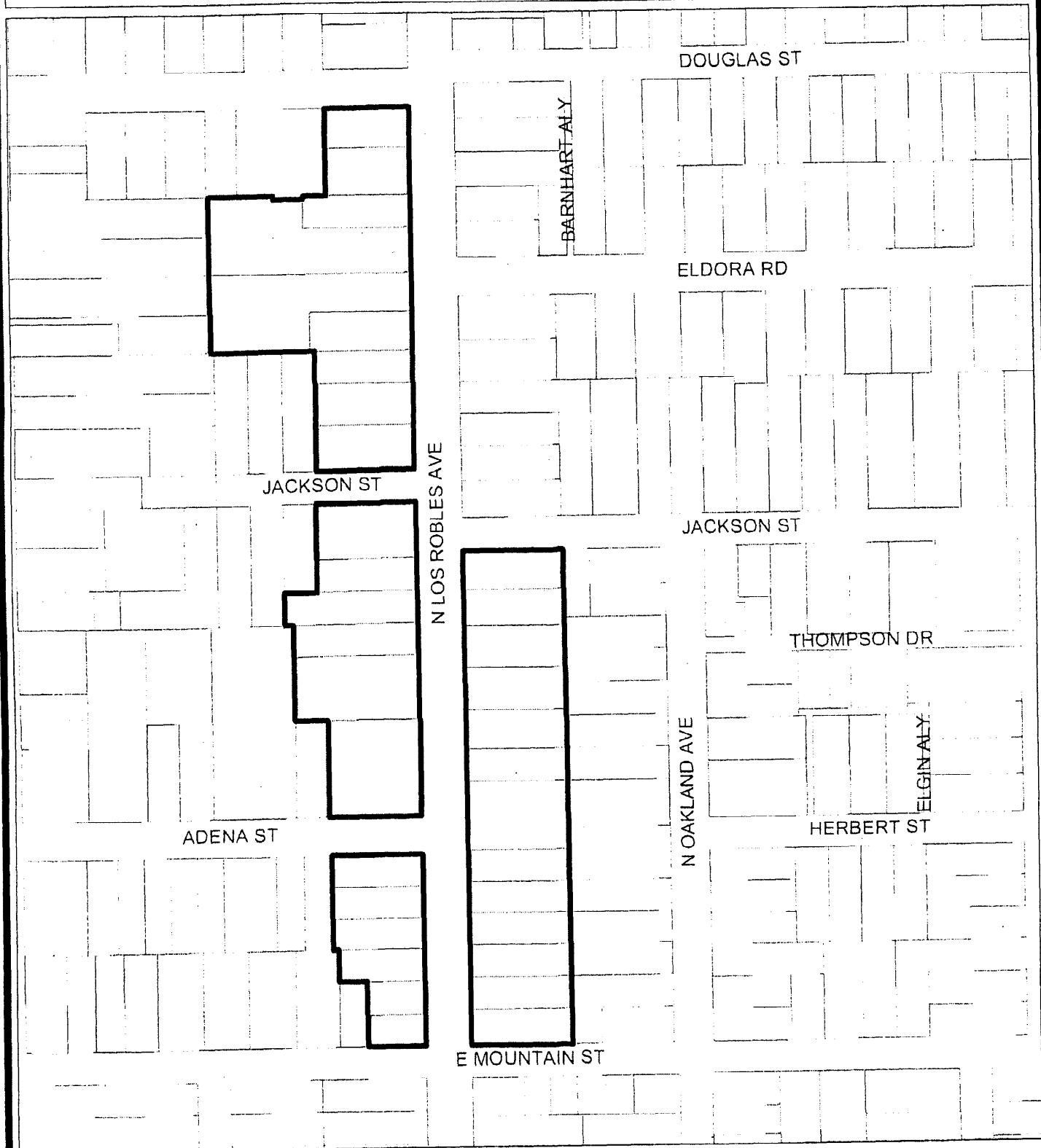
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Scott A. Reimers". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.




Scott A. Reimers
Associate Planner

Attachment: Los Robles Zone Change Study Area
Cc: File, Planning Commission

LOS ROBLES ZONE CHANGE STUDY AREA

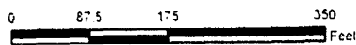


LEGEND

-  STUDY AREA BOUNDARY
-  ZONE CHANGE
-  NO ZONE CHANGE



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Coordinate System
State Plane California Zone V
FIPS 405 (Feet), NAD 1983

From: Linda Vogel [dreammokers@earthlink.net]

Sent: Sunday, October 19, 2008 6:25 PM

To: Reimers, Scott

Subject: re-zoning on Los Robles

My husband and I feel the rezoning and subsequent development would harm our neighborhood. We do not want to change the zoning already allotted. Please take note of this in your discussions.

Thank you

Linda & Keith Hargrove

555 E. Claremont Street

Pasadena Ca 91104

626-791-0802

PETITION TO CITY OF PASADENA ZONING and PLANNING COMMISSION, THE PASADENA CITY COUNCIL, COUNCIL DISTRICT 3 MEMBER CHRIS HOLDEN, and THE NORTHWEST COMMISSION REGARDING:
INTENT TO ADOPT A NEGATIVE DECLARATION and PROPOSED AMENDMENT to the ZONING CODE and the ZONING MAP along NORTH LOS ROBLES AVENUE between DOUGLAS STREET and MOUNTAIN STREET.
HEARING DATE: OCTOBER 22, 2008
Time: 6:15p.m.
Place: CITY HALL, COUNCIL CHAMBERS
(Room S249)
100 North Garfield Avenue, Pasadena, CA

WE, the undersigned Property Owners and Residents, call upon the City of Pasadena Zoning and Planning Commission, The Pasadena City Council, Council District 3 Member Chris Holden and The Northwest Commission not to adopt the Proposed Amendment to the Zoning Code and The Zoning Map along North Los Robles Avenue between Douglas Street and Mountain Street.

The proposed amendments would allow an increase residential density up to 24 units per acre for low or moderate income levels without consideration of the HISTORICAL NATURE OF THE ORANGE HEIGHTS NEIGHBORHOOD and HOMEOWNERS.

The positive finding of the Environmental Impact Study should be disregarded in its entirety as it is based solely on a "best case" scenario. Nonetheless, even under a "best case" scenario the Negative Impacts Include but are not limited to:

1. An invasion of Privacy, failure to consider the impact multi-level buildings will have on existing residents and use of their backyards. (The proposed buildings would be eligible for variances in height, width, setbacks and parking which will result in the infringement on surrounding properties.)
2. Increase Traffic and limiting Access to main roads
3. Increased Noise Levels impacting all single family homes
4. Inadequate Street and Residential Parking for proposed new housing impacting existing residents
5. Increased potential for Crime
6. Negative Impact on Neighborhood Schools
7. Negative Impact on Property Values
8. Proposed Building's Not Suited for a Neighborhood of Historic Homes
9. A displacement of low income families who currently occupy the properties
10. A decrease in the potential for residents to safely walk and/or bike in the area
11. A setback in Pasadena's energy conservation and environmental protection efforts (i.e. removal of trees, increase smog, increase energy use by densely populated development.)
12. The potential destruction of historically significant architecture listed on the National Historical Register.
13. In complete contradiction to Pasadena's concerns over variances infringed by "MacMansions" developed in other residential areas.

NAME: Dr. Alicia M. González
ADDRESS: 949 N. Oakland Ave. Pasadena, CA 91104
PHONE: 626-791-5064

PETITION TO CITY OF PASADENA ZONING and PLANNING COMMISSION, THE PASADENA CITY COUNCIL, COUNCIL DISTRICT 3 MEMBER CHRIS HOLDEN, and THE NORTHWEST COMMISSION REGARDING:
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10. Decrease in the potential for residents to walk and/or bike in the area
11. A setback in Pasadena's energy conservation and environmental protection efforts

NAME: Janice Larkin
ADDRESS: 1015 N. Oakland Ave
Pasadena, CA 91104
PHONE: 310-843-0300

NAME: Sonja Larkin-Thorne
ADDRESS: 1015 N. Oakland Ave
Pasadena, CA 91104
PHONE: 310-843-0300

PETITION TO CITY OF PASADENA ZONING and PLANNING COMMISSION, THE PASADENA CITY COUNCIL, COUNCIL DISTRICT 3 MEMBER CHRIS HOLDEN, and THE NORTHWEST COMMISSION REGARDING:
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12. The potential destruction of historically significant architecture.

NAME: Ron and Stacey Ortiz
ADDRESS: 1009 N. Oakland Ave. Pasadena, CA 91104
PHONE: 626-398-0551