

Novelo, Lilia

From: Arnold Siegel <arnold.siegel@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, November 20, 2011 12:40 PM
To: Bill Bogaard; Terry Tornek; Jacque Robinson; stevemadison@quinnemanuel.com; Margaret McAustin; Chris Holden; Gordo, Victor; Masuda, Gene
Cc: Novelo, Lilia; Jomsky, Mark
Subject: 1116 Armada Drive: Agenda Item 15

Council members:

I am writing to urge you to adopt the recommendations of the Historic Preservation Commission regarding the appeal of its decision regarding the front yard fence.

I have lived at 1030 Prospect Boulevard for 34 years and served as president of the East Arroyo Residents Association. I also served as the chair of Pasadena Heritage and was a member of both the Planning and Design Commissions. I am very familiar with this neighborhood, historic districts, and the zoning code.

The Commission's recommendations are in keeping with the our land use and historic preservation regulations. The appellant's reasons for additional height or more of a wall are specious at best. This is not a dangerous area; just check with the Pasadena Police Department. Not one house on the side of the block of Armada where the applicant's house is located has a front yard wall. In fact, most of the houses in the Prospect Historic District do not have front yard walls or fences. Vague allegations of people taking pictures of their house prove nothing. This is an historic district. People walk through this neighborhood all the time; some take pictures of our houses. One of the joys of this neighborhood and any historic district is to be able to see the houses when people, residents or visitors, take walks. High fences and/or walls will change the character of this neighborhood. If the appellant wanted the security of a gated or walled community, he could have chosen a different area.

Thousands of children have grown up in this beautiful neighborhood without front yard walls or fences since it was developed almost 100 years ago. My wife and I raised our daughter here and never once thought of building a front yard wall or fence. Many people own dogs in this neighborhood and manage without a front yard wall or fence.

If you must allow the applicant to build a fence then do not grant him a departure from the 3 feet height limit or any other restrictions in the zoning code. When I was a member of the Planning Commission, we worked on the revision of the zoning code. We came very close to banning new front yard fences or walls. We finally decided to allow them but with the height limit in the zoning code. The appellant has offered no credible reason for a departure from that limit.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely yours,

Arnold Siegel
1030 Prospect Blvd.
Pasadena, CA 91103

Jomsky, Mark

From: Emina Darakjy <emina@earthlink.net>
Sent: Monday, November 21, 2011 2:50 PM
To: Jomsky, Mark
Subject: 1116 Armada

Hello Mark,

I am writing to express my opposition to the construction of a front yard fence at 1116 Armada Drive. This house happens to be in Prospect Park, the first residential neighborhood in Pasadena to be listed on the National Register of Historic places.

Mr. Drago wants a 48" fence for the security of his family and a possible dog he may acquire down the road. I have lived on Prospect Boulevard for the past 35 years and find the neighborhood very safe. A second reason he mentions for needing this fence is a fire that happened on Forest a few months ago. A fence is not going to prevent a fire if one should happen again. A third reason for wanting the fence is he wants to screen himself from people taking pictures of his house. For your information Prospect Park is considered a heavily filmed- in neighborhood, very often you see Location Managers scouting the area for possible film shoots (we have one taking place today and for the next 2 days). Most of the car commercials you see on television are filmed on the street because of the beautiful tree canopy. I view this as a good thing not a bad thing.

I continue to be amazed at people who move into a neighborhood and want to change it to suit themselves at the expense of everyone else. Mr. Drago in my opinion should have considered moving into a gated community if he does not consider this neighborhood a safe one.

Mr. Drago in my opinion has not demonstrated his willingness to work with Staff and follow the same rules like every other resident in this City. As part of this same Certificate of Appropriateness, he constructed a 6 foot wall in the back of his property on Forest Street without a permit. When asked to tear down that wall, apply for a permit and rebuild it with an 18" set back from the sidewalk, Mr. Drago took more than a year to do that and he still has not paid all the fines associated with that violation nor did he comply with one of the conditions which was to landscape the front of this block wall.

If you are not going to deny the construction of this fence, I urge you to at least to adopt the conditions set by the Historical Preservation Commission at their October 3rd meeting.

With best regards,

Emina

Emina Darakjy
1044 Prospect Blvd.
Pasadena, CA 91103
(626) 792-0586
emina@earthlink.net

Jomsky, Mark

From: John Miller <john_m@tdmarch.com>
Sent: Monday, November 21, 2011 12:29 PM
To: Jomsky, Mark
Cc: 'Emina Darakjy'
Subject: 1116 Armada Drive

21 November, 2011

Dear Staff and Council Members:

In response to the applicant's proposed new wall and the staff's inclination to grant conditional approval, I would like to add a response in a measured way. First of all if the code allows the wall, generally I would have no opinion or qualms about the owner's desire to do that which is proposed. However, the issue here is slightly more complicated than that. I think the community should discuss this in a forum larger than a single residence. The issue is the cumulative effect of changes to the fabric of an historic neighborhood. A neighborhood listed on the National Register for Historic Places.

Observing that the City of Pasadena, with the support and guidance of the local community has determined that this neighborhood has significant cultural value, enough for it to be designated as Historic, then I feel there is significant reason to maintain that historic ambiance. Within walking distance we have La Miniatura and the Gamble House both icons of their era and treasures that suggest close scrutiny when changing the surrounding.

The Secretary of Interior's Standards as enumerated by staff stated that: "The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and environment." I would maintain that any front yard fence in this historic neighborhood would not be compatible with the architectural features anywhere except across the street, where the public can see the extent of the impact on the historic integrity of the ... environment. If this change is to continue, say to all the houses along the street, who could argue that this would have anything other than a negative impact on the historic neighborhood fabric. Even the staff conclusion here supports that impact by stating "...there are few other examples of front yard fences in the immediate vicinity..."

I would request, at the very least, a focused EIR to determine the cumulative impact to the neighborhood of a sectioning off of properties by walled enclosures, and what impact that would have on the fabric of an historic neighborhood.

John S. Miller AIA
Principal

TDW architects, inc.
930 Colorado Boulevard
Los Angeles, CA 90041
TEL: (323) 254-9100
www.tdmarch.com

STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF APPEAL
1116 ARMADA DRIVE FRONT YARD FENCE AND GATE
CASE NO. PLN2010-00269

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CITY CLERK
CITY OF PASADENA

Under Section 17.62.010 of the Pasadena Zoning Code a principal purpose of the Historic Preservation Chapter, Chapter 17.62, is to “(e)nsure that the rights of the owners of historic resources and owners of properties adjacent to historic resources are safeguarded.” Identical language appears in Pasadena Municipal Code Section 2.75.025H, which defines the authority of the Historic Preservation Commission. The Pasadena General Plan mandates, as an Implementation Strategy, the “(e)stablishment of an equitable process for maintaining and perpetuating historical and cultural landmarks. . . .” The October 3, 2011 decision of the Historic Preservation Commission on 1116 Armada Drive violates these Code and General Plan provisions.

The Commission failed to safeguard the rights of the owner of 1116 Armada Drive. The conditions on the approval ignore the need for personal safety, security and privacy that the fence was designed to address. Since acquiring and occupying their home the owner and his family have experienced a fire at the neighboring home, a robbery on their block and episodes of passers by observing and photographing their property. The proposed fence includes design features, and a four foot height, that deal with these dangers. The Commission has mandated a transparent fence without a base or pilasters, and reduced the overall height to three feet. These conditions prevent the fence from providing safety in the event of a fire, security from intruders and privacy from observers.

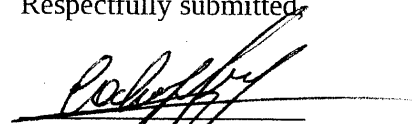
The Commission also failed to conduct its review of this application through an equitable process. As staff reported to the Commission, in 2006 a fence directly across the street at 1111 Armada Drive was found appropriate. This fence has a four foot height as well as a base and pilasters, and is essentially identical to the fence proposed here. The Commission did not justify or explain reaching completely contrary results in these two cases.

What appears to have motivated the Commission was a desire to prohibit all fences in historic districts. At the meeting each Commissioner expressed hostility to any fence at this location, and objected to advice from the City Attorney that they lacked discretion to deny a fence outright. The conditions imposed implicitly punish the owner of 1116 Armada Drive by defeating the safety, security and privacy elements in the proposed design. The Commission has also imposed significant additional costs by requiring a complete redesign, and demanding more costly materials and fabrication methods.

The Commission decision is also not consistent with the interests of property owners adjacent to 1116 Armada Drive. No adjacent owner opposes the proposed fence, and several have expressed support for it. The Commission appears determined to discourage fences in historic districts, and wants to make owners who will not conform to their views pay a very high price in terms of personal safety, security, privacy and cost.

I ask the Council to find the fence as proposed is appropriate.

Respectfully submitted,


Calogero Drago

11/21/2011
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Carol Treweek
1040 Armada Drive
Pasadena, CA 91103-2801

November 21, 2011

Mayor Bogaard
Michael Beck, City Manager
City Council Members
City of Pasadena
100 North Garfield Avenue
Pasadena, CA 91101

RE: Case No. PLN2010-00269
Certificate of Appropriateness for Front-Yard Fence and Pedestrian Gate
1116 Armada Drive (George Palmer Telling, 1924, Prospect Historical District)

Honorable Mayor Bogaard, City Manager Mr. Beck, and the City Council
Members:

I am writing regarding the proposed front yard fencing of 1116 Armada Drive in hopes that you will see fit to honor and uphold the recommendations set forth by the Historic Preservation Commission. This Commission was specifically appointed to work for the long term benefit of Pasadena by protecting the beauty and character of its historic neighborhoods. The Commission has studied the situation and set forth very reasonable recommendations. I understand the concept of homeowner property rights, but at some point all homes change ownership, yet the neighborhood remains and must suffer the consequences when unfortunate precedents become entrenched, ultimately to its detriment.

I walk past the house daily, and have been disheartened by the homeowner's desire to fence off his property. It will be the only house on the east side of Armada Drive for nearly two blocks with such obtrusive front yard fencing. Yes, the house opposite at 1111 Armada was allowed such a fence, but not to the improvement of the ambiance of the neighborhood, and subsequently that house planted a very tall (approximately 5-6') hedge behind the wall, effectively circumventing the 50% visibility guideline. Furthermore, several front yards on the west side of Armada tend to be rather overgrown with hedging, so the prominence of the fencing at the 1111 address is not as noticeable, though still unfortunate.

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As for the security issues, I can only appeal to history: there have been many families along Armada Drive who have been able to raise families and have dogs without the necessity of front yard fencing....With regards to any photography that has been occurring, I can only assume it was not directed at the homeowners personally, but more likely were instances of realtors or persons admiring the landscaping and remodeling, hoping to glean ideas for their own attempts at home improvement. Furthermore, I cannot imagine that even a 4 foot fence would provided any fire protection...more likely a fence would obstruct access to fire fighters.

A few other observations or reservations I have regarding the fencing are as follows:

1. Because I feel that the homeowners did not act sensitively and in good faith towards the concerns of the neighborhood/city regarding the back yard wall, I am somewhat concerned for the final outcome of the front yard fencing. Of note, the homeowner has seemed reluctant to comply with city rulings on various issues.
2. The homeowner has expressed his plans to have a dog in the front yard. I am a dedicated dog walker, and I must say, I always dread going by the homes with fencing up to the sidewalk. The enclosed dog/s invariably rush at the fencing, making for a terrible ruckus and a difficult passing.

Thank you for your consideration in these matters. I appreciate your efforts to preserve our neighborhoods and hope that the decision makers would continue to protect our historical neighborhoods by either not permitting front yard fences or by instituting reasonable restrictions, mindful of the aesthetic and long term consequences.

Sincerely,

Carol Treweek

Chima, Vicrim

From: Suzannah de Kansky <dekansky@verizon.net>
Sent: Monday, October 03, 2011 5:39 PM
To: Chima, Vicrim
Subject: Drago Property

Dear Mr. Chima,

Re: 1116 Armada Drive, Pasadena
As a resident of Pasadena, I support the building of a fence around their property.

Kind Regards,

Suzannah de Kansky
dekansky@verizon.net
mbl. 310.614.3387

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Chima, Vicrim

From: Jessica Lane <mixxmaymay@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, October 03, 2011 5:48 PM
To: Chima, Vicrim
Subject: Support of the drago famil

Good evening,

My name Is jessica lane and I am a local resident of Pasadena supporting the Drago family with the construction of their fence located at 1116 Armada Drive.

Kind regards,

Jessica lane

11/21/2011
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Garzon, Julia

From: Chima, Vicrim
Sent: Monday, October 03, 2011 7:48 AM
To: White, Leon; Stadnicki, Emily F
Cc: Garzon, Julia
Subject: FW: 1116 Armada Dr PLN 2010-00269

From: Arnold Siegel [mailto:arnold.siegel@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, October 03, 2011 7:16 AM
To: Chima, Vicrim
Cc: DeWolfe, Stephanie
Subject: 1116 Armada Dr PLN 2010-00269

Dear Commissioners:

I am writing to express my opposition to the granting of a variance for a 4 foot wall at the above referenced location. I would also request that you urge the homeowner not to build a fence at all. I am not opposed to a driveway gate; the applicant already has one.

I have lived at 1030 Prospect Boulevard for 34 years and served as president of the East Arroyo Residents Association. I also served as the chair of Pasadena Heritage and was a member of both the Planning and Design Commissions. I am very familiar with this neighborhood, historic districts, and the zoning code.

The applicant's reason for a wall is specious. This is not a dangerous area; just check with the Pasadena Police Department. Not one house on the side of the block of Armada where the applicant's house is located has a front yard wall. In fact, most of the houses in Prospect Park do not have front yard walls or fences. Vague allegations of people taking pictures of their house prove nothing. This is an historic district. People walk through this neighborhood all the time; some take pictures of our houses. One of the joys of this neighborhood and any historic district is to be able to see the houses when people take walks. Walls will serve change the character of this neighborhood. If the applicant wanted the security of a gated or walled community, he could have chosen a different area.

Thousands of children have grown up in this beautiful neighborhood without front yard walls or fences since it was developed almost 100 years ago. My wife and I raised our daughter here from 1979-1997 and never once thought of building a front yard wall or fence. Many people own dogs in this neighborhood and manage without a front yard wall or fence.

If you must allow the applicant to build a wall, then do not grant him a departure from the 3 feet height limit or any other restrictions in the zoning code. When I was a member of the Planning Commission, we worked on the revision of the zoning code. We came very close to banning new front yard fences or walls, as the city of Glendale does. We finally decided to allow them but with the height limit in the zoning code. The applicant has offered no credible reason for a departure from that limit.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely yours,

Arnold Siegel

11/21/2011
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Garzon, Julia

From: Chima, Vicrim
Sent: Monday, October 03, 2011 4:17 PM
To: Garzon, Julia
Subject: FW: 1116 Armada Drive
Attachments: hp-10032011.pdf; Armada_1116_100311_fence_sr.pdf

From: John Miller [mailto:john_m@tdmarch.com]
Sent: Monday, October 03, 2011 2:46 PM
To: DeWolfe, Stephanie; Chima, Vicrim
Subject: 1116 Armada Drive

To:

Leon White
Acting Principal Planner
Design and Historic Preservation Section
City of Pasadena
Pasadena, CA

Re: 1116 Armada Drive Fence

Dear Leon:

In response to the applicant's proposed new wall and the staff's inclination to grant conditional approval, I would like to add a response in a measured way. First of all if the code allows the wall, generally I would have no opinion or qualms about the owner's desire to do that which is proposed. However, the issue here is slightly more complicated than that. I think the community should discuss this in a forum larger than a single residence. The issue is the cumulative effect of changes to the fabric of an historic neighborhood. A neighborhood listed on the National Register for Historic Places.

Observing that the City of Pasadena, with the support and guidance of the local community has determined that this neighborhood has significant cultural value, enough for it to be designated as Historic, then I feel there is significant reason to maintain that historic ambiance. Within walking distance we have La Miniatura and the Gamble House both icons of their era and treasures that suggest close scrutiny when changing the surrounding.

The Secretary of Interior's Standards as enumerated by staff stated that: "The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and environment." I would maintain that any front yard fence in this historic neighborhood would not be compatible with the architectural features anywhere except across the street, where the public can see the extent of the impact on the historic integrity of the ...environment. If this change is to continue, say to all the houses along the street, who could argue that this would have anything other than a negative impact on the historic neighborhood fabric. Even the staff conclusion here supports that impact by stating "...there are few other examples of front yard fences in the immediate vicinity..."

I would request, at the very least, a focused EIR to determine the cumulative impact to the neighborhood of a sectioning off of properties by walled enclosures, and what impact that would have on the fabric of an historic neighborhood.

John S. Miller AIA
1090 Armada Dr.
Pasadena, CA. 91103

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MARJORIE K. WYATT
1119 Armada Drive
Pasadena, California 91103
(626) 795-2330

October 3, 2011

Re the Drago request to
install a special fence
around their property,
I live across the street
from them and believe
it would be a plus.

Our neighbors on our South
property border have such a
fence and it looks great.

Sincerely,

Marjorie K. Wyatt

11/21/2011
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Chima, Vicrim

From: Nicole Lane <applejuicenicole@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, October 03, 2011 5:47 PM
To: Chima, Vicrim
Subject: Support of the Drago family ence

Good Evening,

I am a local resident in the city of Pasadena supporting the Drago family at 1116 Armada Dr. with the construction of their fence .

sincerely

Nicole Lane

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October 3, 2011

Dear members of the Historic Preservation Commission,

My name is Emina Darakjy, I am a resident of Prospect Park, a neighborhood on the National Register of Historic Places.

I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed front yard fence and gate at 1116 Armada Drive. In his letter to you, Mr. Drago mentions that when he bought the house it had chain link fences around it. The fencing was never in the front of the house. Mr. Drago talks about a certificate of appropriateness for the wall he constructed on Forest. What Mr. Drago forgot to mention is that he first built that wall illegally without a permit and to the sidewalk. After it was brought to the city's attention, a hearing took place and Mr. Drago was asked to tear down that wall, apply for a permit and rebuild with an 18" set back and landscaping of that 18" strip. Mr. Drago refused to comply, and was given several citations which he has not completely paid. It took more than one year from the date he received the decision letter for him to take the wall down, furthermore he still has not landscaped the strip in front of the wall on Forest

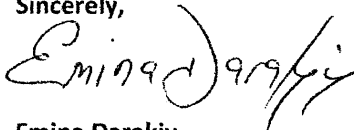
Mr. Drago wants a 48" fence for the security of his family and a possible dog he may acquire down the road. I have lived in this neighborhood for 34 years, raised my children here starting with a 2 day -old infant when we first moved into our house and find it very safe.

Another reason Mr. Drago gives for wanting the 48" fence is the fact that he has seen people photographing his house. This is a neighborhood where a lot of filming takes place both in the interior of various homes and on the street. Seeing Location Managers in the neighborhood taking pictures of houses, the beautiful tree canopy etc. is very common. It could also be just someone admiring the landscaping or the paint color.

I continue to be amazed at people who move into a neighborhood and want to change its look and feel to suit their taste. Mr. Drago in my opinion should have considered moving into a gated community with a guard at its gate if he feels he is not safe at 1116 Armada.

In closing, I urge you to consider the integrity of the whole neighborhood and not just the wishes of one homeowner.

Sincerely,



Emina Darakjy

1044 Prospect Blvd

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Stadnicki , Emily F

From: Anna-Christine Rising <acrising@mac.com>
Sent: Monday, October 03, 2011 5:47 PM
To: Chima, Vicrim
Cc: Christopher Carl Rising
Subject: Re: 1116 Armada Drive - Proposal for 48" high privacy fence in Front Yard

Begin forwarded message:

From: Anna-Christine Rising <acrising@mac.com>
Subject: draft for city council pls read & comment ASAP
Date: October 3, 2011 5:25:18 PM PDT
To: Christopher Carl Rising <crising@mac.com>

To whom it may concern,

On behalf of my husband, Christopher Rising and myself, I would like to take this opportunity to express our full approval and support of our neighbor's proposals for 48 " high privacy fence in their front yard. We have seen the plans and are fully aware of their intent and completely approve of these plans. We live directly across the street from them and have, a few years ago, constructed a four foot fence ourselves for the same reasons that they are looking to do this: privacy and protection for our small children.

We sincerely hope that you will allow this family to construct this wall.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Anna-Christine & Christopher Rising

1111 Armada Drive
Pasadena

11/21/2011
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