

CORRESPONDENCE

04/29/2013
Item 6

Flores, Silvia

Subject: FW: Pasadena General Plan
Attachments: image003.png

From: Blake Longo <blake@ajlongo.com>
Date: April 25, 2013, 8:29:02 AM PDT
To: "city_council@cityofpasadena.net" <city_council@cityofpasadena.net>
Cc: "mjomsky@cityofpasadena.net" <mjomsky@cityofpasadena.net>
Subject: Pasadena General Plan

Honorable Council Members,

As a building owner and business owner and employer in the City for over 20 years I urge you to adopt a plan with much higher allowances for commercial development in our downtown. Right now the plan, which will guide land use for the next twenty years, only allows for 2,500,000 square feet of commercial development in the Central District which is the equivalent of one 5-story commercial building on ¼ of a city block each year.

This restrictive plan will allow cities that surround our great City to benefit and detract from what we have to offer our citizens and employers.

Thank you for your consideration,

Blake

Blake Longo, CIC

A.J. Longo & Associates
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Jomsky, Mark

From: Green, Ben <Ben.Green@redcross.org>
Sent: Wednesday, April 24, 2013 4:40 PM
To: City_Council
Cc: Jomsky, Mark
Subject: Restrictive Development

Good afternoon,

I am contacting you as a resident of Pasadena and a member of the Executive Committee of our Chamber.

I encourage you to double commercial development levels to 5,000,000 square feet (or more) in the Central District of our downtown over the life of the general plan.

I strongly believe if you adopts the general plan with restrictive development, Pasadena's economy will suffer.

Thank you for your consideration.

Ben Green
2790 Butter Creek
Pasadena, CA 91107



Mayor Bill Bogaard and Pasadena City Council
100 North Garfield Avenue
Pasadena, CA 91109
VIA EMAIL

April 24, 2013

Re: Pasadena General Plan

Dear Mayor Bogaard and Pasadena City Council,

The Pasadena Chamber of Commerce is very concerned about the proposed development caps in our downtown. We do appreciate the allowance for the additional housing units in our Central District, but please do not restrict commercial development to any amount below 5 million square feet. Severely restricting development opportunities in downtown will undermine economic recovery when we most need to nurture our local economy, create job opportunities for our residents and revenue for our city.

Interestingly, when you look at the comments and workshop results gathered throughout the General Plan process, you will see that the community supports a higher level of growth and development than your staff is recommending. In almost every area of the city, respondents at the workshops support larger buildings than your staff is recommending. Where staff suggests two stories, the community supports three. Where staff suggests three stories, the community supports four. We agree with the community members that allowing for the additional growth to help stimulate our local economy and create new jobs is healthier for Pasadena. Our general plan should support a healthy economy.

Results of the survey that was conducted of Pasadena residents related to land use, growth and development resoundingly supported more economic development. The two alternatives that received the overwhelming majority of support had essentially the same plan for our downtown: growth and development at significantly higher levels than your planning staff is recommending now. In its report, your General Plan Update Advisory Committee, a group heavily weighted with no-growth advocates, recommended higher levels of commercial and residential development in Pasadena's downtown.

None of that input is reflected in the staff recommendation to the City Council on development in our Central District. The Pasadena Chamber urges you to support what your constituents have said throughout the process, provide development opportunities at levels that encourage a vibrant and growing economy for Pasadena residents and businesses.

In east Pasadena, the Pasadena Chamber is very supportive of developing a technology campus plan for the area between Lamanda Park and the Freeway. We also support continued economic growth along Foothill Boulevard east of Sierra Madre Boulevard and along the Walnut corridor. We also see the underutilized and problem properties along the east end of Colorado Boulevard as opportunities for development or reuse and repurposing as homes for start-ups, tech companies and others. These properties, if appropriately zoned, could help Pasadena grow as a start-up community.

Please support a healthy level of development in Pasadena, especially in our downtown and already vibrant commercial areas such as east Pasadena. Our city is in desperate need of resources and our residents need jobs. At the same time, our community and your residential constituents insist on a significant level of services to maintain our quality of life. Our community also appreciates the entertainment, cultural, dining, shopping, and service opportunities found in our commercial areas.

We would hope that the economic realities of some aspects of the plan would be taken into account as you move forward. Some of the proposals may simply be unworkable from a cost standpoint.

For example, when you consider the development nodes at certain intersections, the Neighborhood Villages, please be aware that the vision for walkable commercial areas at such sites could require a substantial increase in nearby housing. Commercially viable businesses require customers. Right now, the plan may not include enough housing to support the sustainable vision outlined in the plan.

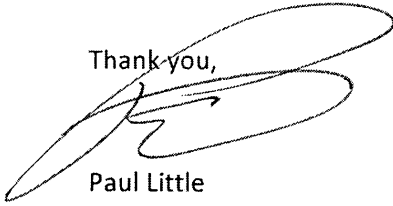
Along east Washington Boulevard, the plan calls for development of mixed use projects with residential and office over retail and commercial uses. Because of the small property sizes and the very short depth of those properties, that would require underground parking. Building underground parking for these parcels is economically infeasible. It is simply too expensive.

The Pasadena Chamber supports the idea of looking for creative solutions to our parking challenges, especially in neighborhood commercial areas. We would be very supportive of some a shared parking program that allows for the development of neighborhood serving businesses and others that could lead to more prosperous commercial opportunities in those areas.

The Pasadena Chamber is also supportive of revisiting the Transit Oriented District parking caps in areas outside of downtown Pasadena. With a dense housing project planned for the intersection of Allen Avenue and Walnut Street, in the TOD, the parking issues that have been experienced adjacent to the Sierra Madre Villa light rail station will soon begin to be evidenced in that area, as well. Parking caps in these areas should be revisited and revised to more appropriately suit the character of east Pasadena.

Thank you for the time and energy you bring to this important discussion. Please consider Pasadena's future needs and the feedback you have consistently received from your constituents throughout this process and allow for appropriate levels of development that suit the needs of our community well into the future.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Paul Little', written over the 'Thank you,' text.

Paul Little
President and Chief Executive Officer

Cc: V. Bertoni, M. Beck, M. Jomsky