



June 16, 2017

Mayor Tornek and Members of City Council  
City of Pasadena  
100 No. Garfield Avenue  
Pasadena, CA 91101

## **ZONING CODE AMENDMENTS FOR ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS**

Dear Honorable Mayor and Councilmembers:

After reviewing the Staff Report and attending the Planning Commission hearing on the issue of incorporating Accessory Dwelling Units into our community, as required by State law, we offer the following comments for your consideration.

We fully understand and are sympathetic to the need for more housing options in Pasadena and the many challenges of achieving that goal. Three generations of our General Plan have provided for housing development but consciously directed it away from single family residential neighborhoods. Very recently this Council amended the General Plan to set development caps at higher levels in the Central District, along transit corridors and in transit "nodes" to protect neighborhoods while providing for more housing. This state mandate requires Pasadena to attempt to integrate its directives with our General Plan principles and policies.

The Staff Report (Attachment A) identifies where the incorporation of ADU provisions could be considered compliant with General Plan policies, however, in the larger sense, this state requirement runs intuitively counter to Pasadena's very carefully crafted plans to protect and preserve neighborhood character. It is frustrating to have this mandate imposed upon the community and we are concerned about the impacts on our historic neighborhoods and overall community character. Nonetheless, we understand there is little choice in implementing responsive code amendments, but ask that careful study and consideration be given at every opportunity to reduce impacts and maintain our community character.

### **Specific comments and questions:**

We support the recommended architectural compatibility standards to be applied as they do now in historic districts.

The loss of tree canopy is a serious concern, and though the tree protection ordinance offers some assurance, we ask that further study and consideration be given to

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potential loss of trees to new construction under the ADU zoning. What measures can be implemented to further protect trees and thus address energy efficiency as well.

Street parking is most certainly a likely by-product of more density and affects quality of life in our neighborhoods. An analysis of current street parking -- availability, current use, street widths, etc. in areas where ADUs will most likely proliferate is important to addressing the potential problems that could be generated.

Park land -- Pasadena is "under-parked", especially in certain parts of the city, and more residents will mean more park usage. Maps should identify current park land in the areas where ADUs are possible or most likely, park fees, etc. The acquisition of new park land should be a key consideration as part of this effort.

Will the additional thousands of units that could result from ADU construction be counted in the calculation of residential development caps? Will the caps still apply?

We appreciate the Council's careful consideration of these issues.

Sincerely,



Susan N. Mossman  
Executive Director



Jesse Lattig  
Preservation Director

## **Jomsky, Mark**

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**From:** Chris Peck <chrisp@cmpeck.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, June 17, 2017 9 17 AM  
**To:** Jomsky, Mark  
**Subject:** Granny Flat Ordinance

Hi Mark,

I am sending a note to City Council in support of lowering the threshold for lot size to 5,000 sf for granny flats.

Starting 18 years ago, my wife and I lived in North Central Pasadena for several years as our first home in Pasadena. This lot contained a legal second residence at the rear of the lot. The existence of that second home allowed the front house to be offered at a more affordable rent. This made it possible for us to live there, and develop roots in this city. I would say that the lot was about 50 x 200 = 10,000 sf. The second dwelling unit was most likely existing non-conforming, as both structures dated back to the 1920s or 1930s.

I am not sure what is driving the high cost of rental housing in Pasadena, but it is clearly out of reach. I have architecture and engineering employees now, and in discussion with Heritage Housing Partners, one of my clients, they agree that the market rate rental housing is generally too expensive for the local work force. I believe that the granny flat concept is one that will allow moderate densification without altering the residential character of the neighborhoods, and will put a decent dent in the affordable housing supply that I feel is needed. It will do all of this organically without need for public funding, tax credits, subsidies and the like.

**Chris Peck, AIA, PE**

**c m peck inc architecture + engineering**  
25 South El Molino Avenue Pasadena, CA 91101  
t: 626-683-0708

**Jomsky, Mark**

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**From:** Marge Nichols <marge@margenichols.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, June 17, 2017 11:59 AM  
**To:** Jomsky, Mark  
**Subject:** Granny flats

I'm strongly in support of reducing size of lots for building granny flats - a great approach to providing more affordable housing, as well as income opportunities for homeowners

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**Jomsky, Mark**

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**From:** Nancy Youngblut <blauhorse@live.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, June 17, 2017 4:00 PM  
**To:** Jomsky, Mark  
**Subject:** Yes to support Granny Flat lot size reduction

I can't make the city council meeting on Monday but I wanted to express my support for reducing the lot size for a granny flat, thank you.

Nancy Youngblut  
945 Brentnal Road  
Pasadena, CA 91105

Sent via the Samsung Galaxy S7, an AT&T 4G LTE smartphone

## Jomsky, Mark

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**From:** Wesley Reutimann <wesleyreutimann@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, June 19, 2017 7:16 AM  
**To:** Tornek, Terry, Madison, Steve, Jomsky, Mark  
**Cc:** Kristin Chew Reutimann  
**Subject:** Public Comment for 6/19/17 | Item 17 - Accessory Dwelling Units

Good morning Mayor Tornek, Council Member Madison and City Clerk Jomsky,

As we are unsure if we will be able to attend this evening's council meeting, we would like to submit the following comments regarding the City's efforts to update its ADU policy.

Our household supports local efforts to improve the City's diversity of housing options, including Accessory Dwelling Units. Having reviewed and read up on other City policies on ADUs, we specifically support the following parameters for the new policy:

- **establish a minimum lot size requirement of 5,000' or less** (e.g., Santa Cruz allows ADUs on properties of 4,500 square feet, Long Beach 4,800, Santa Monica 4,000 and some cities have no minimum lot size at all including Arcadia, Glendale, Monrovia, LA City and County and Burbank).
- **adopt a maximum height of 25'** to allow ADUs above garages
- **avoid affordability covenants** to facilitate the development of ADUs
- **allow impact fee waivers** in exchange for affordable housing agreements

By providing additional flexibility for and encouragement of ADU development, these recommendations would help increase the City's supply of housing for families, students, and persons on a fixed income. Providing more local housing for local students, families, and people who work in the City should also help support the City's climate action goals, specifically with regard to transportation and land use; the transportation sector remains the state's #1 source of GHG emissions, accounting for an estimated 40% of all emissions, trend increasing.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Wesley and Kristin Reutimann

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Date: June 19, 2017

To: Pasadena City Council  
100 N. Garfield Avenue  
Pasadena, CA 91101

From: Jonathan Pacheco Bell

Re: ADU ordinance update at City Council, June 19, 2017

Dear City Council Members,

I join my colleagues at the Greater Pasadena Affordable Housing Group in submitting this letter of support for the Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) ordinance update before your council on June 19, 2017. Specifically, I ask you to strengthen the ADU ordinance in the following ways:

- A. I agree with the Planning Commission's and staff's recommendation to reduce the minimum lot size for ADUs to 5,000 square feet because: 1) 5,000 square feet is a standard lot size owned by working families in Pasadena who would benefit from ADUs; 2) the majority of comments at the community workshops recommended 5,000 sf; and 3) the majority of cities chosen by staff to compare to Pasadena allowed ADUs in properties at 5,000 sf or less. A minimum lot size of 5,000 square feet would offer a reasonable threshold that opens up more opportunities for property owners with standard sized lots and diverse income levels to build ADUs legally. The larger the lot size hurdle, the lesser chance for middle-and working-class families to build ADUs on their properties. We cannot continue to codify upper-class privilege in the Zoning Code vis-à-vis minimum lot size standards benefitting wealthier property owners with larger parcels. As the intent of State Law is to facilitate production of ADUs, a minimum lot size of 5,000 square feet enables this goal in Pasadena.
- B. I support development of ADUs in the RS and RM zones. The inclusion of properties zoned RM increases opportunities to build safe and legal ADUs in Pasadena.
- C. ADUs should be allowed in Landmark Districts and historic districts. The addition of Landmark and historic districts increases opportunities to build safe and legal ADUs throughout Pasadena, unencumbered by the city's many historic overlay districts.
- D. I support the reduced side and rear yard setback areas for ADUs and encroachment into the side and rear yards as buildable space. ADUs should have the same encroachment allowance as other accessory structures already permitted in side and rear yards. The reduced setbacks facilitate development of ADUs – including the conversion of existing accessory structures in yard areas, such as detached garages and pool houses – in a manner that's consistent with existing conditions and standards. Priorities matter. We must be less concerned with storing cars and pool supplies and more concerned with housing people.
- E. The recommendation of 800 square feet as the limit on the size of the ADU is arbitrarily low and does not accommodate the spatial needs of single occupants, couples, or families residing in accessory residences. Instead, increase the maximum size of an ADU to 1,200 square feet to

provide occupants more generous living space, consistent with State Law. As to the concern of ADU scale and size in relation to the primary residence, I support a code section amendment requiring a subordinately sized ADU if the primary residence is 1,200 sf or smaller.

- F. Staff is recommending that the height limit of 17 feet remain. I recommend that ADUs be allowed above garages by increasing the height limit to 25 feet. Pasadena allows homeowners to have a second floor in their homes. My recommendation is consistent with this allowance. While concerns of view obstruction and privacy are understandable, these justifications should not be fashioned into poison pills to kill the development of ADUs above garages. Privacy issues can be mitigated with design standards prohibiting windows and doors facing neighbors. Further, the 17-foot height limit of a detached ADU ignores the fact that many long-ago-built legal nonconforming apartments exist above garages in Pasadena. As a city that respects its history, Pasadena can learn from such past practices. Multi-story single-family residences and second story additions are allowed in Pasadena; in other words, there are existing pathways in the Zoning Code to build dwellings above 17 feet in single-family residential areas, so let's create a legal pathway for ADUs, too.
- G. While I believe in affordable housing, I do not support affordability covenants for ADUs. In other situations affordability covenants are appropriate, but not with ADUs. In this case it can be used as a poison pill to prevent homeowners from wanting to build an ADU.
- H. I recommend that ADUs be allowed a waiver of the Residential Impact Fee of \$18,979.88. This exorbitant cost discourages working families from developing new ADUs on their properties. Such an egregiously high cost serves as a poison pill that thwarts ADUs. Paradoxically, this Fee can encourage development of unpermitted housing built "on the stealth" at a far lower cost.

Our state is in a housing crisis with a shortfall of 1.3 million units that drives up housing costs faster than wages. It is essential that you, as our Council members, do all you can to help relieve this severe housing shortage. In addition to helping to increase sorely needing housing stock, there are many good reasons to support the above recommendations, namely:

1. To create life cycle housing for aging parents who might otherwise wind up in assisted-living facilities or nursing homes, thus reducing the cost of their care.
2. To keep affordable housing from being concentrated in one spot and to invite economic diversity.
3. To house "boomerang" kids or those who want to stay close but can't afford local housing.
4. To provide a potential source of income when homeowners are ready to downsize, especially for seniors on a fixed income. They can live in the ADU and family members can move into the main house, or rent it out for retirement income.
5. To allow more money to circulate and stay in the community through the employment of local contractors and construction workers, as opposed to large developers that are usually from out of town.



6. To increase property values and provide more property taxes for the city.
7. To minimize traffic by allowing people to live closer to family and work.
8. To prevent a possible fair housing lawsuit due to the disparity between those who want ADUs but cannot build them due to an unreasonably high minimum lot size, and those who have large lots but don't have the need for ADUs; and to remove the class-based inequalities that were built into and carried over from the original Second Dwelling Unit ordinance.
9. To help increase the city's housing stock without the use of subsidies. Due to limited federal funds for housing, the city has lost 85% of its budget for affordable housing. ADUs are one important source for helping to solve the housing crisis without spending tax payer dollars.
10. To help remedy informal housing in Pasadena that is, by definition, uninspected and thus unsafe. A reminder: unpermitted housing exists in every jurisdiction, every geography, every demographic, and every socioeconomic stratum. Unpermitted dwellings, garage conversions, subdivided houses, and occupied RVs exist across the City of Pasadena. The lack of affordable housing coupled with skyrocketing housing prices are partly due to unworkable zoning laws that stifle efforts to build legal ADUs and therefore contribute to the proliferation of unpermitted dwellings. It's a simple calculus: when people need housing, people build housing. And when the Zoning Code creates barriers, people ignore the code.

Pasadena calls itself a "world class" city with "great neighborhoods and opportunities for all," a city that's "responsive to our entire community," and one that values "diversity and inclusiveness."

Here's where you can prove it by advocating an equitable ADU ordinance that enables new housing arrangements *for all residents*.

Thank you,



Jonathan Pacheco Bell  
Pasadena District 5 resident  
@c1typlann3r



Barbara Joan Miller  
1770 Oakdale Street  
Pasadena, CA 91106

June 19, 2017

Mayor Tornek and Members of the City Council  
City of Pasadena  
100 N. Garfield Ave.  
Pasadena, CA 91101

RE: ZONING CODE AMENDMENTS FOR ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS,  
Item 17, 6/19/2017

Dear Honorable Mayor and Councilmembers:

After attending Community Workshops, the Planning Commission Hearing, and reading the Staff Report proposing solutions for amending the Zoning Code for Accessory Dwelling Units, I would like to share some concerns. I offer them as a long term Pasadena resident and a strong proponent of Landmark Districts.

Our housing needs have certainly changed since most of our neighborhoods were built. We have an urgent need for affordable housing and for new creative approaches to our relationship with existing housing stock.

We also live in one of the most historic areas of L.A. County, with beautiful mature trees and lots of neighborhoods offering an architectural character and stability that is hard to find in other parts of L.A.

The issues we face are very complex; demanding that we find approaches that are balanced and fair. Clearly, existing zoning code is too restrictive.

Staff has done a great job: considering public concerns and offering solutions that seek the sweet spot. Below are some considerations:

1. Landmark Districts are the best tool to combat incompatible development and the issue of mansionization. Design Review is critical. If Staff is correct that State Law does not allow a Certificate of Appropriateness to be used for development of ADUs, I endorse their

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recommendation that ADUs in Landmark Districts should not be visible from the street.

2. Overly built-out lots may greatly reduce our stock of treasured mature trees in residential neighborhoods:

- . Matured before our dwindling water resources
- . Offering energy savings by providing shade
- . May help to mitigate effects of pollution & carbon dioxide
- . Are beautiful to look at.

Although our trees are protected by the Tree Ordinance, we must be diligent to protect our green assets.

3. We also need to be careful regarding minimum lot size and maximum unit size (both FAR and height caps). While we need to relax current laws, we don't want to go too far in the other direction. Mansionization can come from poorly scaled residential additions, and also from ADUs that cease to be subordinate in size and massing to the primary residence. I support Staff recommendations. By dropping the minimum lot size to 5,000 SF, we would allow areas with the most acute need for affordable housing to partake in this new opportunity while continuing to protect our single family neighborhoods.

4. The question of whether ADUs can only be rented for 30 days or longer, or whether they may also be used for STRs needs to be addressed. Are ADUs addressing the need for affordable housing or allowing land-rich property owners to stay in their homes by increased financial opportunities, or both? Perhaps caps on STRs can help regulate this, so we don't find the intended increase in affordable housing is hijacked by the potentially more profitable option.

5. Since State law defines an ADU as providing cooking facilities, I think the minimum side and rear set backs (2' for 22') for accessory structures (p.11 on Staff Report), is not sufficient for newly constructed ADUs. Would that allow adequate access and egress for Fire & Safety? Especially if a neighbor also has an adjacent structure(s) with the 2' minimum setback. Perhaps there might be a requirement of 6' from any other building structure (currently it reads "on site") for new construction of an ADU. And if that is not appropriate code, perhaps the minimum setback should be 3-4' for new construction of an ADU.

Thank you for your hard work on this issue and for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Barbara J. Miller

**Martinez, Ruben**

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**Subject:** FW: CLUE Supports Amending Zoning Code to Lower the Threshold for ADUs to 5000 sq ft.

**From:** Rabbi Jonathan Klein [<mailto:jklein@cluejustice.org>]

**Sent:** Sunday, June 18, 2017 10:16 AM

**To:** Bell, Cushon; Morales, Margo; Kennedy, John; [jjkennedy411@att.net](mailto:jjkennedy411@att.net); Sullivan, Noreen; De La Cuba, Vannia; [victor@liuna777.org](mailto:victor@liuna777.org); Madison, Steve; Thyret, Pam; [andy@mvmmpartners.com](mailto:andy@mvmmpartners.com); Tornek, Terry; Wilson, Andy

**Subject:** CLUE Supports Amending Zoning Code to Lower the Threshold for ADUs to 5000 sq ft.

Dear Esteemed Mayor and Council Members,

CLUE Clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice joins

- 1 Housing advocacy organizations such as Greater Pasadena Affordable Housing Group,
- 2 Environmental organizations such as the Sierra Club which advocate for density,
- 3 Other Economic Justice organizations such as the Coalition for Economic Survival, and
4. **Pasadena's very own Planning Commission**

in urging Pasadena City Council to amend section 17 50 275 of the city's zoning code to allow homeowners to build Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU's) on lots with a minimum of 5,000 square feet instead of the quite limiting threshold of 15,000 square feet Moreover

- 1 We support the right to build ADUs in all areas, including Landmark Districts
- 2 We also support
  - a Allowing units to be built up to 50% of the total living area of the primary unit
  - b Both attached and detached ADUs
  - c Minimal to no limitation on placement (i.e. visibility from the street should not be a limit)
  - d Softening height limits to 25 feet instead of 17 feet, the current restriction

This is consistent with the city's zero waste and zero emissions goals, density helps prevent rising levels of CO2 emissions. The New Urbanism Movement of architects and planners note that "Filling in cities instead of building suburbs could save the amount of energy produced by 2,800 power plants and could prevent 26 TRILLION miles of driving." Moreover, the Planning Commission correctly recognizes (p 7) that the staff recommendation of 7,200 sq ft was still too restrictive, 5,000 sq ft opens up the possibility of significant new housing at all levels of affordability being built

Moreover, the staff report notes that this amendment would not contradict other city policies and would not have a deleterious impact on the welfare of the community (see Attachment A)

The current policy is far too restrictive, designed to prevent density, which makes no sense in an era in which there is a severe housing shortage, a rise in regional homelessness, and growing income disparity. Current policy has led to only two ADUs being built since 2003 (p 5 of staff report). In an era of depleted resources and in an effort for Pasadena to become more in relationship with its surrounding communities, it is time for this amendment to take effect

**There are simply too many homeless, too many poor—too many middle-class renters unable to find housing as well—to justify this luxury for wealthy Pasadenans. Even Libertarians and other anti-regulatory advocates will surely join us in demanding this shift in policy. Please take action now and adjust city zoning policy to reflect this 21<sup>st</sup> Century need to respond to housing, environmental, homeless, and ethical needs for more equity. Thank you!**

Blessings,  
Rabbi Jonathan Klein, on behalf of CLUE

Rabbi Jonathan D. Klein, Executive Director | **Clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice: Creating a Just and Sacred Society (CLUE)**

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[Santa Monica](#)

[West LA](#)

Erika Foy  
672 Magnolia Ave  
Pasadena, CA 91106  
foyfamily@sbcglobal.net

June 19th, 2017

**Pasadena City Council**

100 North Garfield  
Pasadena, CA 91106

Dear City Council Members,

I am writing to ask you to not support several of the Planning Commission and staff recommendations in regards to Accessory Dwelling Units- and for you to consider how their suggestions may harm and commercialize single family neighborhoods. Many of their suggestions do not support HE 1.1 of the General Plan. In fact, as Pasadena Heritage so eloquently suggested, "the state requirement runs intuitively counter to Pasadena's very carefully crafted plans to protect and preserve neighborhood character." I ask you to carefully consider the following opportunities to reduce impact on our single family neighborhoods.

- A. The Zoning Code Amendment does not include "pending" Landmark Overlay districts like Magnolia Avenue. The city has quite a few districts who have applied for Landmark status and this must be recognized.
- B. The Zoning Code Amendment does not maintain neighborhood character because street width is not addressed. Street width is only considered in the Hillside overlay district but the council should consider a standard width applied to the entire city. Street width should also determine the number of ADU's and occupants allowed.
- C. By lowering the square footage to 5,000ft, Policy HE1.1 of the General Plan is ignored. A lower square footage will not preserve character, scale and quality of residential neighborhoods. South Pasadena's 12,500 limit does foster a stronger support of the General Plan and must be considered by the council.
- D. The staff suggestion of 800 square foot units must be maintained in order to keep green space and character of neighborhoods. It is also concerning the potential loss of trees if units are allowed to be larger.
- E. Council must not allow for second story ADU's for privacy purposes on single family neighborhoods. The suggested idea that these second

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units, if allowed, can be built without windows on neighboring sides  
does not support Policy HE1.1

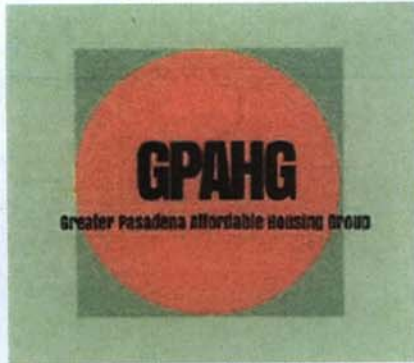
- F. Building separation of 10ft for exterior units must be maintained in order to support Policy HE1.1. With a purposed 6ft building separation, we leave no open space for children to play and little sunlight on property. You also risk more trees and green space being sacrificed.
- G. How will the city enforce the regulations on ADU's when we are already lacking in city funds? A one time fee should be added to the homeowner to pay for this.
- H. How will the city deal with trash receptacles lining single family neighborhoods as more residents are added?
- I. Street parking will be affected and a study must be done to understand availability, current use, street widths, etc. in high density areas. Will the city allow overnight parking permits and jam our beautiful streets with cars?
- J. The proposed changes by the Planning Commission and staff increases the number of potential ADU properties to from 1,275 to 13,320 units. Will this be considered in the residential caps of the General Plan?
- K. Lastly, Residential Impact Fees cannot be reduced as purposed by the Planning Commission. As you are well aware, we are severely "under-parked" especially in the Central District where most of the new ADU's will be built and we need this money to solve a serious problem. The city must identify where new parks can be created to help with the high density living being forced on us by the state and utilize this revenue to solve our park depleted areas. The city must remember it is beneficial to keep families attracted to our city and must not become a "child free zone." If the fees are reduced and park space is not taken into account, we are creating a child free zone that is inhospitable to families with kids. Not the Pasadena I want to live in. A city good for kids is a city good for everyone.

I deeply appreciate the consideration of these issues by the Council.

Sincerely,

Erika Foy





Date: June 14, 2017

From: Philip Burns, Greater Pasadena Affordable Housing Group

To: Pasadena City Council

Subject: Comparative Study of Impacts of Existing ADUs in Pasadena

Dear Councilmembers:

As the City is reconsidering its 2003 law which severely limited the ability of single-family homeowners to develop Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) on their properties, Councilmembers must consider the issue from a number of perspectives, among them care for the elderly, availability of housing, and social equity. Representatives of neighborhood groups have also rightly claimed that the effect of Accessory Dwelling Units on neighborhood character is also a consideration. With that in mind, the Greater Pasadena Affordable Housing Group (GPAHG) set out to examine the potential impacts of ADUs on neighborhood character.

The City of Pasadena already has approximately 740 legal non-conforming\* Accessory Dwelling Units. Thus we are able to estimate the future impacts of ADUs on neighborhood character by comparing neighborhoods which currently have few ADUs to those which have many. Seeking to find two very comparable neighborhoods or streets only differentiated by the presence of ADUs on their street, we settled on the neighborhoods shown in Figure 2. These two neighborhoods are located immediately adjacent to each other and are within the same boundary streets of Hill, Washington, Allen and Mountain. Both are zoned RS-6, neither is a Landmark District, and each has 7,500 square foot lots.

The chosen high-ADU neighborhood represents the largest concentration of ADUs in the City.

	High-ADU Neighborhood		Low-ADU Neighborhood	
Primary Dwelling Units	236	83%	133	98%
Accessory Dwelling Units	50	17%	3	2%
Total Housing Units	286		136	

**Figure 1. Number of Housing Units in the Study Areas.**

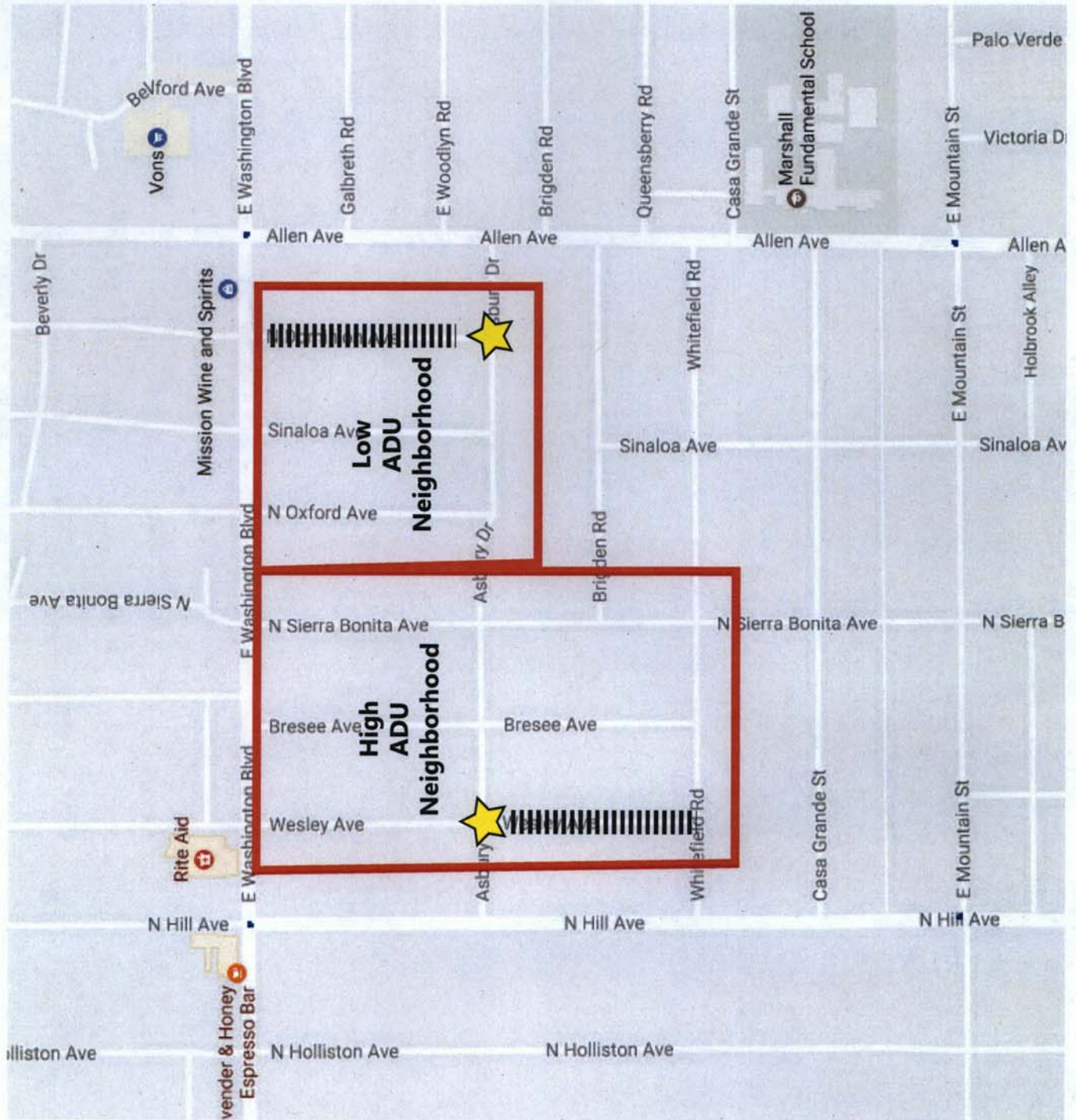
\* Non-conforming under the 2003 law; some of these units may now be legal per the 2017 law. Some of these units may also be non-conforming duplexes rather than ADUs.



Figure 2

## Study Areas for ADU Neighborhoods Comparison

-  Study Areas
-  Intersection for Traffic Counts
-  Block for Parking Counts







**Figure 3. High ADU Neighborhood.** Wesley Avenue between Asbury and Whitefield.



**Figure 4. Low ADU Neighborhood.** Dominion Avenue between Washington and Asbury.

We compared these two neighborhoods in terms of the following characteristics:

- Neighborhood Character/Visual Impact
- Property Values
- Traffic
- Parking

## **Neighborhood Character/Visual Impact**

As Figures 3 and 4 show, from a casual drive down the street, the presence of ADUs is not noticeable. Setbacks, building heights and building modulation are unaffected by the presence of ADUs. Any differences in character are due to architectural styles, tree canopy and other issues unrelated to the ADUs.





**Figure 5. Close-up of Dominion Avenue.** There are no ADUs on the lots visible in this image.



**Figure 6. Close-up of Wesley Avenue.** There are two ADUs on the lots visible in this image.

Figures 5 and 6 show closer views of houses on Wesley and Dominion Avenues viewed at an oblique angle. Again, the ADUs are not visible and do not play a role in the visual character of the neighborhood.





**Figure 7. Study Area ADU Examples.**

Figure 7 shows ADUs located in the study areas, or immediately adjacent in Bungalow Heaven. ADUs are generally hard to spot; however, with a direct view down the driveway, most ADUs are visible from the public right-of-way. (3) and (6) are exceptions, where the ADUs are screened by a fence. (3), a property within the Bungalow Heaven National Historic Register District, is an example of a historically sensitive screening of an ADU. (1) is an example of a carriage house, or above-garage ADU. The images show a variety of architectural styles and varying levels of attractiveness, largely depending upon the architectural distinction of the main house and the level of upkeep of the property over time.



## Property Values

GPAHG compared recent property sales between the two areas in order to determine whether there might be an effect of ADUs on property values of adjacent single-family homes. It is easy to surmise that ADUs increase the property values of the properties on which the ADU is located; the additional living space and income potential of the ADU clearly increase the overall property's worth. However, some residents may fear that ADUs decrease the overall desirability of the neighborhood, as reflected in property values of adjacent single-family homes with no ADUs.

	High-ADU Neighborhood		Low-ADU Neighborhood	
	Total	Per SF	Total	Per SF
Recent Average Sales Price	\$705,250	\$442	\$657,500	\$454
Number of Sales	24		8	

**Figure 8. Home Sale Value Comparison.** Comparison of sales prices of homes with no ADUs within the past three years.

Figure 8 demonstrates that there is no major difference between the neighborhoods in the value that buyers assign to them. The average sales price of a home in the high-ADU neighborhood was 7.2% higher than in the low-ADU neighborhood, while on a per square foot basis it was 2.6% lower. While there are many variables at play in the value of any particular house, it is very difficult to conclude that ADUs have a generalized negative effect on neighborhood sales prices.

## Traffic

GPAHG went to the project site and conducted simultaneous traffic counts at Asbury and Wesley (high-ADU neighborhood) and Asbury and Dominion (low-ADU neighborhood). These traffic counts took place on Monday, May 22, from 5:50 to 6:50 pm, and Wednesday, May 24, from 7:45 to 8:45 am. The results of the traffic study are presented in Figure 9. The Eastbound Through and Westbound Through movements are omitted because they correspond to through traffic, not traffic related to the comparison streets of Wesley and Dominion Avenues.

Traffic levels on the two streets are very low, with less than 60 cars per hour (one car per minute) making a movement onto or off of Wesley or Dominion Avenues. This compares to a local roadway capacity of 600 vehicles per hour. Volumes are slightly higher at Asbury and Wesley, but when accounting for the fact that Asbury and Wesley is a 4-way intersection, as opposed to the 3-way intersection of Asbury and Dominion, that difference disappears.

It is reasonable to conclude that in general, ADUs increase the number of trips in an area; residents do need to commute out of the area by some means. However, the increase in trips is minimal compared to the capacity of the roads. For example, if each of the eight ADUs on Wesley Avenue between Whitefield and Asbury created three daily trips, they would add only 24 daily trips to the street.

	Asbury & Wesley High-ADU Neighborhood		Asbury & Dominion Low-ADU Neighborhood	
	AM Peak	PM Peak	AM Peak	PM Peak
Southbound Through	7	9	N/A	N/A
Southbound Right	17	14	16	14
Southbound Left	6	7	12	9
Northbound Through	2	4	N/A	N/A
Northbound Right	1	1	N/A	N/A
Northbound Left	3	2	N/A	N/A
Eastbound Right	5	0	N/A	N/A
Eastbound Left	2	8	4	5
Westbound Right	3	4	9	8
Westbound Left	0	2	N/A	N/A
Total	46	51	41	36
Total - Adjusted for 3-Way Intersection	46	51	55	48

**Figure 9. Traffic Study.**

## Parking

GPAHG surveyed parking conditions on Wesley Avenue between Asbury and Whitefield, and on Dominion Avenue between Washington and Asbury (see figure 2). The parking survey was conducted at the end of each traffic study hour, at 6:55 pm on Monday, May 22, and at 9:00 am on Wednesday, May 24. Of the two parking counts, the more relevant one to this analysis is the evening parking count, since residential parking demand is greatest in the evening. GPAHG wanted to determine whether ADUs created a parking crunch in the area.

	Wesley Avenue High-ADU Neighborhood	Dominion Avenue Low-ADU Neighborhood
Vehicles Parked	11	19
On-Street Parking Capacity	60	64
On-Street Parking Utilization	18%	30%

**Figure 10. Parking Study.**

Figure 10 shows that parking utilization was low on both streets. However, it was higher on Dominion Avenue than on Wesley Avenue. This is likely due to the commercial uses at the north end of Dominion Avenue at Washington Boulevard. The ADUs on Wesley Avenue did not have a large effect on on-street parking.

While it is reasonable to conclude that ADUs will generally increase the demand for on-street parking, it is highly doubtful that this effect will be very strong. Furthermore, since in the majority of Pasadena's single-family neighborhoods, overnight parking is prohibited, there is a large supply of available on-street parking throughout the day.

## Conclusion

This study compared two similar, adjacent neighborhoods in the City of Pasadena which differed in the number of Accessory Dwelling Units in them. The high-ADU neighborhood had 50 Accessory Dwelling Units, or 17% of the total housing stock, while the low-ADU neighborhood only had 3 Accessory Dwelling Units, or 2% of the total housing stock. GPAHG evaluated the impact of these ADUs on neighborhood character, property values, traffic and parking and found no significant impacts. Therefore, we conclude that the potential effect of future ADUs on single-family neighborhoods in Pasadena will be minimal.

The Honorable Terry Tornek, Mayor and Members of the City Council  
City of Pasadena  
100 N Garfield Avenue  
Pasadena, CA 91109

June 19, 2017

## Comments on Second Unit Proposal for Pasadena

Dear Mayor Tornek and City Council Members,

I look at the state of the world and realize that each of the critical issues on the seemingly overwhelming list of serious problems impacting our planet and our City cannot be addressed in isolation but must be considered in relation to the broader issues if we are to come up with effective enduring solutions. I view changes in our city from my neighborhood, Washington Square, located in North Central Pasadena west of Lake Avenue and South of Washington Boulevard.

I hope that my comments will help my City deal with our urgent need of affordable housing, while recognizing that the decisions made will have permanent effects on Pasadena and the lives of Pasadenans.

Pasadena as well as our country and planet faces crucial issues to quality of life of our residents from the living environment to social and economic justice. These issues, such as affordable housing, do not exist in isolation, and we cannot seek solutions to one while ignoring the others. I share these thoughts on the current issue of second units within this broader view of the quality of life in Pasadena through the rest of this century.

We must consider why this is an issue. Why do we need more affordable housing in Pasadena? Why do so many people say they would like to live in Pasadena but cannot afford to do so?

**The General Plan.** As a progressive City, we went through an extended public process to develop a revised General Plan to guide Pasadena through the next decade and demand. That plan summarizes the views of the citizens on development and the quality of life in our city and its neighborhoods. That document should be the highest document on development for our beautiful City. Many of us would argue that it, like our Federal Constitution, can be better in many important areas, but the principles it describes cannot be ignored.

The location and types of residential development are outlined in the General Plan. It sets the limits of residential growth and locates that growth away from single family housing, placing it close to transit facilities. The second unit ordinance under consideration would place a large expansion of population in almost all single family zoned neighborhoods, contradicting the General Plan, virtually eliminating single family zoning.

**Cost of housing and affordability.** Rising home prices and rents are nothing new. The large decline in affordability is new. The price of homes in my neighborhood went from about \$2,000 in the 1920s to about \$20,000



in the 1960s. A tenfold increase over 40 years. Those prices went up tenfold again by 1990s when prices went to \$200,000. In the past 25 years the prices went up 3-4 times. This is a lower rate of increase than the increase over most of the preceding century.

Thus, declining affordability is created by the extraordinary decline in income compared to inflation available to ordinary people.

**Need for effective, affordable housing solutions.** There is little question that affordable housing is needed in Pasadena as it is in the rest of California, in much of our country and the world. What should our city's goals be, and how can we effectively meet those goals?

We must begin by recognizing that the issue affects a broad part of the population from people with very limited incomes (at or below the poverty line) to people with crucial but modest paying occupations, including teachers and civil servants in all fields. It includes families and single people, older people on limited incomes and young people starting out looking for their first housing, students and retirees, members of all the diverse ethnic and racial groups that make up Pasadena.

The multiple solutions that Pasadena pursues must be effective. As such, they must be evaluated, not only on their impacts on the problem, but also on their impacts on the environment and life in Pasadena, because their implementation will be long-lasting and difficult to reverse.

**Housing and the Environment.** Faced with Global Warming and more local environmental issues affecting the health of our residents, especially children, we must consider crucial environmental issues with each planning decision we make for our city. I'll describe two of them here.

A recent study in the journal *Urban Forestry and Urban Greening* and summarized in the *StarNews* describes massive losses of trees in residential areas in most of the Los Angeles Metropolitan Area associated with construction on developed single family lots. That loss was associated with mansionization, smaller additions, and adding second units. At the end of this decade long study, Pasadena was the only community studied maintaining over 40% tree coverage. Since trees are so important in absorbing CO<sub>2</sub> and moderating the urban heat islands that are contributors to global warming, any development in our City that reduces our tree cover must be considered carefully.

The location of housing also has significant environmental impacts, especially on the residents of that housing. Studies of the impacts of air pollution from motor vehicles stresses the impact on the health and development of children as well as the general population. We have housing being built in Pasadena within 100 feet or so from the 210 Freeway. Was that impact considered when that housing was approved?

**Neighborhood impacts on population density.** I live in the Washington Square neighborhood. Our one-quarter-mile square neighborhood includes about 250 single-family residences in the Washington Square Landmark District: apartments, mostly on the north block of Hudson Avenue and Lake Avenue; three churches; Washington Park; a shopping center filling most of one block and other commercial properties including two large rental halls; a large Los Angeles County welfare office building and dental and other offices. Mixed in among the single-family homes are a half-dozen or so second units. The apartments include two large buildings for low-income seniors or others requiring section 8 subsidies.

Our 1/16<sup>th</sup> square mile included about 1000 people according to the 2000 census. (I found that data easier for me to use than the 2100 census.) This is 16,000 people per square mile. Pasadena as a whole has about 6,000 people per square mile. Our neighborhood has evolved over the past quarter century. At that time, there were few young children here. Now there are many families with infants and young children. There is more shared housing.

For comparison of population densities in people per square mile consider the following examples:

Pasadena	6,000	Washington Square	16,000
New York City	27,016	West Hollywood	18,297
Los Angeles	7,545	Hawaiian Gardens	15,389
Chicago	11,858	Bell	14,802
San Francisco	17,246	Larchmont	17,747

If the second unit proposal is successfully implemented, I estimate we could add 400 or more residents to our neighborhood that would raise the population density to 22,400 people per sq. mile! This would certainly have a significant effect on life in our neighborhood. In addition, the North Lake Specific Plan would allow addition housing on Lake Avenue.

**Economics of Second Unit Construction and Rental.** Many people advocating wide-spread construction of second units including some affordable housing advocates see it as a source of income. I believe those are contradictory goals. I have commented that the cost of adding a free-standing second unit home would cost at least \$100,000 plus the cost of financing. Some have told me that is low. Why would a homeowner make that kind of investment and expect less than market rate for a rental? Most of the second units now rented by their owners are not rented at "affordable" rates. Even rooms in homes are commonly rented at \$1000 a month. These rooms are beyond the range of low-income residents.

**Regulation and Funding.** The only solutions, until incomes catch-up with inflation, must include regulations controlling the rent of affordable housing and subsidies to build and operate that housing.

**Pasadena's Solutions.** The population of California has tripled over the last sixty years. All the housing we have built has not met the need. Simply building more will not solve the problem. In a built-up city, like Pasadena, we can only address a small part of the problem without severely compromising our city. We must find solutions to the housing crisis that will maintain Pasadena as an ethnically and economically diverse community without compromising the environmental qualities that make Pasadena such a desirable place to be.

The values found in our General Plan are a place to start. We must fight for a return of the local planning authority and autonomy that is necessary if we are to develop and apply creative visions necessary to maintain and enhance Pasadena's place as a livable city.

Sincerely,

Joe Feinblatt

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April 9, 2017

Ho. Terry Tornek  
Mayor,  
City of Pasadena  
100 N. Garfield Avenue  
Room S228 P.O. Box 7115  
Pasadena, CA 91109-7215

Dear Mayor Tornek:

I write on behalf of Bungalow Heaven Neighborhood Association (BHNA) in response to questions which were presented at the Open House on April 4, 2017 and concern construction of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs). These questions regarding the ADUs were reviewed by the members of the Board of Directors of BHNA and the Board has agreed that we oppose changes in the requirement of 15,000 square foot minimum for the lot size; the elimination of prohibition of ADU construction in Hillside Overlay Districts or Landmark Districts; or any change in the existing maximum size limit of 800 square feet. Several years ago we worked with the city to set these regulations and our position on these standards has not changed.

We agree that historically ADUs have been an important component of housing supply. A number of homes in Bungalow Heaven have "granny houses," but we are troubled by the implications of proposed changes to regulations that would allow for construction of additional ADUs. The stipulation of 15,000 square feet as a minimum requirement for construction of an ADU on a single family dwelling plot, limitations in Hillside Overlay areas and Landmark Districts, and requirements of minimum space of 800 square feet all support the standards for which our city is so widely known. Construction of new ADUs would undermine the standards set for historic landmark districts, Bungalow Heaven being the first of several in our city. It would cut the amount of open space in our neighborhood and others, and it would undermine of green life that is central for the beauty of our city. We are admired nationally for our lawns, gardens, and trees. Crowding additional housing on space less than 15,000 square feet, would rob our single family plots of those images. (I need to know more of the facts that underlay the argument for 15,000 sq. feet.)

In similar fashion, eliminating protections of our Hillside overlays and Landmark Districts would undercut out image and the attraction we offer to our city.

(The same is true for the Hillside and Landmark District argument and the 800 square feet maximum. What positions were taken that set these restrictions?)

Changing in the rules governing parking would also be harmful. Historically Pasadena has required citizens to park their cars off the street, and many homes have garages. The proposed change that specifies that no additional parking on the lot would be required if is located within ½ mile of a public transit stop would mean that there would be no additional parking space on plots with ADUs would be required, given that the bus transit system covers major sections of the city. In other words, most parts of the city have public transit within ½ mile. The city's efforts to increase development of public transportation means even more single family dwellings would be free of the parking garage requirements. This would mean even more homes would not have off-street parking. Stated another way, it means more people would seek to park on the streets or have no provisions to park. This would be problematic in areas of the city, especially in Bungalow Heaven, where streets are not wide enough to allow for parking on the street, or it would say to our overnight visitors you can come but don't bring a

car. In short, we certainly hope the city is not proposing the elimination of the requirement of off-street parking.

In stipulating that "requests to create an ADU must be processed ministerially—without any discretionary review or a public hearing" suggests that cares and concerns neighbors might have about the addition of additional housing would be ignored. This means that the decision to build an ADU as a second floor to my garage might shade my neighbor's yard or solar panels could be done without my neighbors having any voice in the decision making. This would be problematic. While each of us who owns our own property like to have control over it, we do believe that we function better as a city if we show respect for our neighbors.

Members of the BHNA Board are also concerned about the city's ability to enforce proposed changes. There is a proposed requirement that the property owner must reside in one of the two units on the property as a primary residence, real question arises. How would the city monitor and enforce this stipulation? Or could it do so? Is there any requirement for residents to report to the city information about who lives on their property and is there any mechanism to establish the validity of such reports? We don't believe so. To date such request for information has never been requested before, and we believe it is not the city's business to inquire.

There is a proposed requirement that these ADUs cannot be used for short-term rentals of less than 30 days. Can this city monitor short-term rentals? Pasadena does not have rent control provisions. There have already been tensions over Airbnb rentals in sections of the city at times of the Rose Bowl parade and other events associated with the Rose Bowl. Are these ADUs proposed to provide space for family members, in the tradition of the "granny home," or is this a mechanism that will just allow a home owner to make more money.

The map provided by the city indicates that there are sections of the city where lots are large enough in the areas allowed by the existing provisions (districts other than Hillside Overlays and Landmark districts). This would mean that there are areas in the city where ADUs might be constructed to allow for additional housing. This would allow the city to be in compliance with state law.

BHNA trusts you will take our concerns seriously and will not alter the provisions that we worked so hard to establish. We understand that concerns from the community will be presented to the Planning Commission at a public hearing and we trust that you will notify us of the time and location of these hearings. We can be reached by email at [peggyrenner7@gmail.com](mailto:peggyrenner7@gmail.com), at my home, 775 North Mentor Avenue, Pasadena 91104, or by phone at 626-791-8858.

Sincerely,

Peggy Renner

President, Bungalow Heaven Neighborhood Association

Cc: Margaret McAustin, Council person, District 2  
Victor Gordo, Council Person, District 5  
Patricia Keane, District 2 representative to the Planning Commission  
Tim Wendler, District 5 representative to the Planning Commission

### Garage Height Limit for ADUs.

Dear Esteemed City Council Members,

I'd like to voice my concern about the arbitrary 17-foot height limitation of accessory dwelling units as laid out in Ordinance discussed today.

In recommending that the allowable height of ADUs be increased, we are asking that the city council to not only take into account state law, but to consider conforming with existing Site Planning and General Development Standards currently applicable to all proposed development and new land uses, as well as remodeling projects in the city of Pasadena.

According to these Standards, homeowners who wish to add non-ADU structures to their homes are subject to height limits established for the applicable zoning district. These range from 23-24 feet to the top plate and 27-38 feet to the ridgeline.

Under the proposed Ordinance discussed today, homeowners would be asked to comply with a hard and arbitrarily-set 17-foot height limit.

We ask that homeowners who wish to build an ADU on their property be afforded the same treatment as homeowners intending to modify their properties in other ways.

Concerns with infringement on a neighbor's privacy and views have already been taken into account by Standards set by the city and serve as a fair measure for considering height requirements for ADUs.

Moreover, there are already several existing ADU-eligible spaces built on top of garages and other structures in Pasadena. By implementing an arbitrary height standard, the city would be ignoring, if not outlawing, an already existing practice to provide more comfortable living spaces within the city.

In short, we ask that the height limitation be set according to Site Planning and General Development Standards to not just create more flexible housing arrangements, but to also reinforce existing homeowner rights.

Dr. Jill Shook, (626) 675-1316, [Jill@makinghousinghappen.com](mailto:Jill@makinghousinghappen.com)

Item No. 17  
June 19, 2017