



May 3, 2021

Pasadena City Council
City of Pasadena
100 North Garfield Avenue
Pasadena, California 91101

RECEIVED
 2021 MAY -3 AM 11:23
 CITY CLERK
 CITY OF PASADENA

Re: Hillside Development Permit No. 6837 - 801 S. San Rafael Ave.

Dear Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council:

Since we were alerted to this project, Pasadena Heritage has believed that the John Van de Kamp house qualified as a landmark, and ask you to consider this Hillside Development Permit in light of its eligibility as an historic resource. We are pleased that Staff has agreed in the Staff report that it may be eligible.

After watching with distress so many changes happening at the property (new 3-car garage in the front, total gutting of the interior, demolition of exterior walls except for the front facade, etc.), we nominated it as a landmark, submitting the application on July 6, 2020. Due to miscommunication, with fault on both sides, we did not receive the city's determination that the building did not qualify in their opinion until after the appeal deadline.

Because we could not appeal, and in response to questions raised in the decision letter that we eventually received, we submitted additional information on January 15, 2021 documenting additional information about John Van de Kamp's continued prominent career and accomplishments while living in the house. We believe the additional information we submitted clearly demonstrates the property's eligibility as a landmark. We included information about John Van de Kamp's work in the years between 1987 and his passing, showing important legal, political and civic accomplishments. It also contains two important testimonials with regard to eligibility from Bill Bogaard and Doug Kranwinkle, both of whom knew and worked with John, and who attended meetings and events at the property.

We ask members of the City Council to affirm that the property is eligible to be a City of Pasadena Landmark under Criterion B: "It is associated with the lives of persons who are significant in the history of the City, region, or State." We further request that you ask the planning staff what would have been different in the review and approval process for the multi-phased project that has now been largely completed. If there are changes made that should be reversed as they would not have been allowed to happen to an eligible historic home, we ask that reversal be required.

Pasadena Heritage does not specifically object to the request for the two detached structures in the rear of the house as they will not be seen from the street. However, we see the conversion of the guest house, which served as John's office, as an issue since it is an important part of the eligible resource. There are seven factors that define integrity of an historic resource: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Because this house is notable due to its connection with John Van de Kamp, the most applicable aspect of integrity is association. We

believe the conversion of the guest house/office to a partially open cabana would cause a substantial adverse change, and therefore believe the project should not be exempt from CEQA. We agree with the Board of Zoning Appeals in their decision. They could not find reason to believe the project should be exempt from CEQA.

Though this project is complex, the City Council has only a few decisions to make. First, do you believe that John Van de Kamp's house is eligible as landmark? If yes, then you must decide whether or not this work would materially impair its ability to convey its significance. Because significant changes have already occurred as part of earlier phases of work, we believe there is now a fine line whereby the house could be made ineligible. We also remind you that you can take into account the cumulative impacts of recent work.

Pasadena Heritage believes that these changes will impact the resource's eligibility and therefore CEQA analysis should be performed, but we will stand by the City Council's decision. If CEQA review were undertaken, then mitigation measures could be put in place to help the site retain and convey its importance. It would be suitable to have a plaque installed noting the history of the house and John Van de Kamp's accomplishments. We also ask the City Planning Department and City Council to give close scrutiny to this project. There is evidence that some work already done has deviated from approved permits, and we believe that work done incorrectly must be redone in accordance with the permits issued.

Thank you very much for your consideration of this important item and for taking our views into account. We believe a project can move forward, but it must be respectful of John Van de Kamp's legacy and role in Pasadena.

Sincerely,



Susan N. Mossman
Executive Director



Andrew Salimian
Preservation Director

1179 Yocum Street
Pasadena, CA 91103
January 15, 2021

Ms. Susan Mossman, Director
Mr. Andrew Salimian, Preservation Director
Pasadena Heritage
651 South St. John Street
Pasadena CA 91105

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Dear Ms. Mossman and Mr. Salimian:

I write in support of the application of Pasadena Heritage to have the property located at 801 South San Rafael, Pasadena 91105 (sometimes referred to as "the Property") declared an eligible historic resource based on the fact that it was the long-time residence of John K. Van de Kamp, a very distinguished legal, political and business leader of Pasadena, Los Angeles County and the State of California. John and his wife, Andrea, acquired the Property in 1987 and, with their daughter, Diana, resided in it as the Van de Kamp family residence until John's death in 2017.

John was a personal friend. My wife and I met John and Andrea before they married. We were introduced at a dinner party hosted by John's parents, Harry and Georgia Van de Kamp. Georgia, herself a force of nature, was an extremely active and effective leader in the Pasadena area, traits which she passed on to John. We became close friends of John and Andrea over the years, playing tennis together and dining in one another's homes frequently. I assisted John in his campaigns for Los Angeles County District Attorney and California Attorney General. He served with distinction in both of those offices and was highly respected nationally. (As an aside, we had as a visitor to our home about 10 years ago former New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson who greatly admired John and asked to meet him; I took Governor Richardson to the Property where he and John talked about national affairs for hours.)

After his service as California Attorney General, John turned his focus to Pasadena, the town in which he had been raised, attended schools and lived while serving as an Assistant US Attorney and then the first Federal Public Defender. It was a frequent occurrence for John and Andrea to host events at the Property attended by very distinguished guests. We had the pleasure of being there and meeting, among others, both Governors Edmund G. Brown Senior and Junior, then San Francisco Mayor and now US Senator Dianne Feinstein, former US Trade Representative Micky Cantor and California Treasurer Jesse Unruh. The Property was a well-known site of high-level political gatherings. When John died in 2017, his funeral attendees included a Who's Who group of local, state and national political and governmental leaders.

In addition to his political elder statesman activities while residing at the Property, John became increasingly involved in significant local matters. He was instrumental in guiding the Pasadena Education Foundation, chairing its advisory board, meeting with and providing guidance on numerous occasions to the Superintendent of Education and assisting in raising funds to improve Pasadena public schools. He was personally active in the annual Principal for a Day Program which he encouraged me and many others to support. John was also a close advisor to Rachael Worby, the founder and continuing leader of Mus/ique, now a widely acclaimed cultural success in Southern California. Ms. Worby was a frequent dinner guest of the Van de Kamps at the Property.

Finally, while residing at the Property, John was a distinguished business leader. He was for many years the full-time Chairman of the Board of Lawry's Foods, a prominent international restaurant and specialty foods company.

Although this is largely intended to be about John K. Van de Kamp's prominence while residing at the Property, I would be remiss if I did not mention that John's wife, Andrea, was also an active and effective leader in the community during that same time period. Among other activities, she was of central importance in helping the City of Pasadena raise funds to restore a different landmark property, The Rose Bowl.

In short, the Property had a very distinguished period during the residence of John K. Van de Kamp and his wife, Andrea.

Very truly yours

C. Douglas Kranwinkle

Bill Bogaard

Pasadena, CA 91105-2825

January 16, 2021

Susan Mossman, Executive Director
Andrew Salimian, Preservation Director
Pasadena Heritage
651 South Saint John Avenue
Pasadena, CA 91105

Dear Sue and Andrew,

As you requested, I am pleased to confirm in this letter certain information regarding John Van de Kamp, a lifelong resident of Pasadena, and believe that his home at 801 South San Rafael Avenue meets the criteria to be declared eligible for landmark status as a Pasadena Landmark under Section 17.62.040 of the Pasadena Zoning Code.

Based on my nearly 50 years of friendship and community and social interaction with John in Pasadena, there is no doubt in my mind that this property meets the requirements of Criterion B as being "associated with the lives of persons who are significant in the history" of Pasadena, Southern California, and the State of California.

For a full statement of the facts and circumstances of John's residence in the South San Rafael Avenue property, reference is made to the Landmark Nomination submitted by Pasadena Heritage for the John K. Van de Kamp House. John and his wife, Andrea, acquired the house in 1987 and, with their daughter Diana, made it their family home from then until John's death in 2017.

When my family and I moved to Pasadena in 1970, one of the first families we met were Harry and Georgie Van de Kamp and their son, John,

who were neighbors three doors away. From that point on, we had the privilege and pleasure of knowing and socializing with John Van de Kamp and his family, and standing in awe of his many talents, energy and accomplishments. His interests and activities, his responsibilities and relationships, his good judgment and positive impact were truly extraordinary. In a word, he was a classic "Renaissance man"!

In the domain of public service, he served as Assistant U.S. Attorney, Federal Public Defender, Los Angeles County District Attorney, and California Attorney General, frequently taking courageous and principled positions on difficult issues facing California. His landmark cases included antitrust, mergers, legal compliance, and the environment.

In the pursuit of community service, frequently as a volunteer in the public interest, he served with the Norton Simon Museum, Skid Row Development Corporation, the California Conservation Corps, the California Historical Society, the Pasadena Education Foundation, St. Andrew Church in Pasadena, and the fundraising for the Jackie and Mack Robinson Memorial at Pasadena City Hall.

John was frequently called upon to deal with problems that seemed to have no solution, but required the utmost of intelligence, integrity, good judgment, and impeccable reputation. Throughout his long and distinguished career, he was dedicated to Pasadena, its many institutions, and its tradition of civic engagement and public service. At the time of his death, the Los Angeles described him as "a towering political figure" and a person who "lived for the values of justice and opportunity that define the State of California".

Among those who saluted John at the time of death were Warren M. Christopher, former U.S. Secretary of State, Governor Jerry Brown, Xavier Becerra, California Attorney General, Los Angeles City Attorney Mike Feuer, U.S. Judge Stephen Trott, Mickey Kantor, former U.S. Secretary of Commerce, and many others. It is clear to me that during his lifetime he was the best known public and political figure in the City of Pasadena, and a source of great pride among the people of this great City.

John Van de Kamp's home at 801 South San Rafael Avenue for 30 years is surely an eligible landmark in Pasadena and should be recognized as such.

If there is any way I can be helpful in regard to this historic property, please do not hesitate to let me know.

Very truly yours,

Bill Bogard

KEVIN J. BRODY
E-mail:



April 30, 2021

Mayor Victor Gordo
The Pasadena City Council

Re: **801 South San Rafael Avenue, Pasadena**

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2021 MAY -3 AM 11:24
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Dear Esteemed Mayor and Members of the Pasadena City Council:

Although not a Pasadena resident, our family has lived in nearby Altadena for almost 35 years, and I am a past member of the Board of Directors of Altadena Heritage. I have also been associated with the Hunt Ortmann law firm for over 25 years. Our firm and its predecessor have actively engaged in the practice of construction law involving several Pasadena projects going back to the mid-1980s.

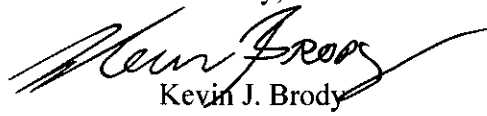
It has been our honor to represent the current owners of the 801 South San Rafael Avenue property in various legal matters relating to the home's renovation and improvement. This is not the first time we have represented Michael Rachlin (a noted local architect) and Deborah and Rodney Ross in residential projects. They are serious professionals whose integrity is unquestionable; the quality of their work is also of the highest level.

It is our understanding that all of the permits requested for the San Rafael project were previously approved by City Staff without issue, and that these same staff members were (and remain) against this last minute ("not in my neighborhood") and unprecedented attempt to give landmark status to a single-family residence in opposition to the wishes of the current homeowner.

We respectfully request that our clients be allowed to complete their project at 801 South San Rafael Avenue and that this attempt by the project opponents to use the landmark status designation not for any legitimate public purpose, but rather merely for the own self-serving ends, be denied.

Mayor Victor Gordo
April 30, 2021
Page 2

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kevin J. Brody". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Kevin J. Brody

cc: Michael Rachlin

Doug Brignole

Beverly Hills, CA 90211

<https://www.dougbignole.com>

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2021 MAY -3 AM 11:24
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May 1, 2021

To: Pasadena City Mayor: Victor Gordo
Pasadena City Manager: Steven Mermell
Pasadena City Attorney: Michele Beal Bagneris
and Pasadena City Council Members

Re: Building Approval for residential property: 801 S. San Rafael Ave.
Pasadena, CA 91105

I am a Pasadena native, a former Pasadena home owner and former owner a successful and well respected business in Pasadena (“Brignole Fitness” / “Brignole Health Club”).

I am writing in regards to the property located at 801 S. San Rafael Ave., in Pasadena, which is being remodeled by Rodney Ross and Deborah Rachlin Ross.

My understanding is that the Zoning Appeals Board, apparently influenced by the Pasadena Historical Society, who appears to be influenced by a personal relationship with a neighbor of this property, has decided to grant an appeal (ostensibly for “further review”) of the approval which was **twice** granted by the Department of Planning and Development.

This seems illogical and unfair for a number of reasons.

Either the City of Pasadena Department of Planning and Community Development has the authority to grant building approval, or it does not. Decisions made by this department follow well established guidelines, which includes withholding approval for remodeling structures which have been deemed “historically

significant”. The property at 801 S. San Rafael Avenue had not been deemed as such before the property was purchased nor before the remodeling started—so it is not subject to that type of withholding.

An individual who purchases property is certain to base that decision on whether that property has been deemed “historic”. A property deemed “historic” would cause the buyer to encounter remodeling restrictions, so that status would have to be known before the purchase. The 801 S. San Rafael Ave. property had not been deemed “historic” when it was purchased by the current owners, so that status should not be imposed now—after their enormous investment has already been made.

David Reyes, the Director of the Pasadena Department of Planning and Community Development, is an experienced and knowledgeable planning professional. Negating the approval that this department has already granted to Deborah Rachlin Ross and Rodney Ross—the owners of this property—essentially invalidates Mr. Reyes’ position, as well as the authority of the entire Department.

If the approval already granted (twice) by this Department, for the remodeling of the property located at 801 S. San Rafael Ave. is negated, then the Pasadena Department of Planning and Development is not a valid agency and should be disbanded.

Blocking the already granted building approval appears to be an arbitrary attempt on the part of the Historical Society to win favor with a neighbor of said property, with the frivolous excuse that the intended remodeling design violates an ill defined standard. The design plan is eminently reasonable, consistent with the environment there, and proposed by a reputable architect and builder. There is no logical reason why the already granted approval should now be denied.

Having had my business on DeLacey Avenue in the Old Town district, I remember the often unreasonable efforts on the part of the Historical Society to interfere with the reasonable development plans of John Wilson. Is this the kind of favoritism, game-playing and corruption for which Pasadena wants to be known? While it’s understandable that truly significant historical structures should be preserved, the status of “historical” or “landmark” should be used frivolously.

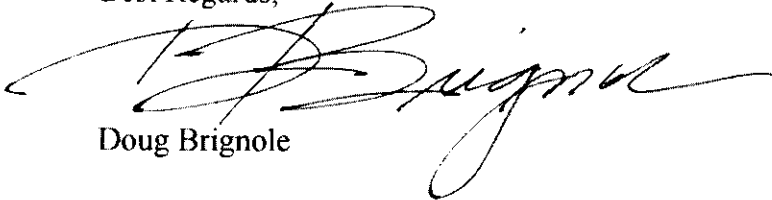
If the City of Pasadena wants to encourage investment of homes and commercial property, it should make clear which properties are deemed “historic” **before** those investments are made. If a precedent is set whereby “historic” or “landmark” status

can be imposed **after** someone purchases a piece of property in Pasadena, such that it cannot then be reasonably remodeled, it will stifle investment and growth.

Frankly, I believe a reasonable case could be made that the Historical Society's (and the City, by extension) current attempt to block a twice granted approval by the Department of Planning and Community, for the development of the property being discussed here, constitutes "damages" and "malicious harassment" of the property's current owners. Aside from the delays and the cost of those delays, plus the threat of forced plan changes, the precedent that is created is shameful. Who would want to purchase property in Pasadena, knowing that building approval policies are applied inconsistently, unfairly and illogically, or that the status of the property can be changed after the purchase has been made?

I urge you to **stop the appeal** of the approval of the building plan for the property located at 801 S. San Rafael Ave., and I urge you to establish clear, solid and reliable policies on which future investors, architects and builders can rely.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Doug Brignole", with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Doug Brignole

Martinez, Ruben

Subject: FW: 801 S San Rafael Ave

From: Martha Bell <...>
Sent: Monday, May 3, 2021 11:52 AM
To: Varsh, Tess <TVarsh@cityofpasadena.net>
Subject: 801 S San Rafael Ave

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Re: HDP#6837

Dear Board of Zoning Appeal Members and Planning Staff,

I am writing to you about HDP #6837 at 801 S. San Rafael Avenue. I live directly across the street at 808 S. San Rafael Avenue.

I have watched the developer's work on this house since it began in February 2020. I find it disturbing. I do not understand how the city allowed a massive largely windowless 600 square foot box of a garage to be built in the middle of the front yard. I see it every day as I pull out of my driveway.

I am aware the developer is now asking for permission to build three more accessory structures in the back yard. Based on how the front yard garage was handled, I have reason to worry, and am worried, that the planning department's process for approving these additional accessory structures will also be flawed.

I urge the City Council to approve the appeal and examine this entire project—what the developer already did, what the developer now wants to do, and what the developer clearly plans to do next.

-John and Martha Bell

05/03/2021
Item 8

Martinez, Ruben

Subject: FW: HDP#6837

From: joana pak <

Sent: Monday, May 3, 2021 12:28 PM

To: Jomsky, Mark <mjomsky@cityofpasadena.net>; Driver, Jennifer <jdriever@cityofpasadena.net>

Subject: HDP#6837

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HDP#6837 801 S San Rafael City Council CALL FOR REVIEW January 25th

We are neighbors to the property at 801 S San Rafael.

The purpose of this letter is to let the City and the neighborhood know of our strong support for the proposed project, and the reasons for it. We are communicating with you, the City and the larger neighborhood, because we are concerned about the unity of the neighborhood and harmony among its residents, and believe that this project deserves to be supported.

We understand, The City of Pasadena Hearing Officer approved on January 6th, a Hillside Permit for accessory structures in the Rear Yard. The City's Hearing Officer based its decision on a set of issues within its purview under the Zoning Ordinance including the use of property, the height of buildings, the setbacks of buildings, the percentage of lot coverage, the lot area requirements, and the parking requirements. Their approval was based on the design meeting the criteria of the City's Zoning codes. The project is completely in keeping with the standards of the City Zoning Ordinance, blocks no protected views and poses no other detriments. In fact it provides amenities and improvements valuable to the neighborhood.

However, City Council review has been scheduled for Monday May 3rd .The appeal raises concerns both about the project and the City's process. From what we see, the four month City Zoning process, preceded by the months of working with staff, was neither short nor deficient but rather, complete and proper. And as a neighbor, it is concerning that the local Neighborhood Association and Pasadena Heritage has filed objections without first soliciting and/or communicating to its members the concerns about this project and its obvious unilateral action against this property seems counter to the purpose of a neighborhood association.

We assume that we all have some areas of agreement like the willingness to welcome new neighbors and the interest in improving our neighborhoods.

Moreover the Ross's, in deference to this appeal, are willing to invest in improving an existing house and lot in this neighborhood, partner with the City to meet all applicable codes and are sensitive to the current neighborhood and strive for compatibility to the area.

We urge you the City Council and the Mayor to allow this project to move forward and uphold The City of Pasadena Hearing Officer's approval of January 6.

Steven and Joana Yeun

Martinez, Ruben

From: Suzanne Weiss <[redacted]>
Sent: Monday, May 03, 2021 2:28 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Subject: May 3, 2021 Meeting, AGENDA ITEM 8. Public Hearing, appeal of BZA decision on Hillside Development Permit No. 6837 (801 S San Rafael Ave

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Written comment regarding **Agenda Item No. 8.** (801 S. San Rafael Ave.) May 3, 2021

Please enter the following comments into the public record:

Without accurate description, it is not possible to determine if a project is subject to CEQA review

Or if other statutory provisions apply. The appeal should be denied.

The appellant has bought and improved at least six houses since 2001. I made a cursory comparison of the county assessor's description and the descriptions on Zillow. The properties I looked at are 1460 Linda Ridge Rd, 8 Oak Knoll Terrace, 835 Linda Vista Ave, 561 Woodland, 1155 Linda Vista, and 801 S San Rafael. Three of the properties show large variances between the assessor's square footage and the square footage shown on Zillow. The assessor lists them all as one unit per lot, but Zillow lists three of them as two units. There should not be variations in the number of units or the square footage.

If these properties had been properly identified, it might have allowed the City to collect tax on ADU's disguised as non-habitable units, because a guest house is more valuable than a garage, for example. That is the problem with "serial" permitting processes. If there is a bathroom, the structure is habitable and should be assessed as such when the building permit is signed off.

Serial improvements that obfuscate the actual scope of the intended project may lead to approvals that would otherwise not be granted, depriving the public of the right to comment, possible loss by the City of money or other benefits. Mislabeling structures can reduce assessed value, (unless the assessor physically inspects the property and properly identifies it). This can result in a loss of property tax revenue.

The property improvements at 801 should have been properly described, and the project, which has continued apace, should not have been segmented. Why? (1) To enable accurate assessment (really, a shower in a "home office" but not in the "home gym?") (2) to determine compliance with zoning laws, and (3) to alert the public of possible overlooked errors and allow for correction and compliance before it is too late: especially in neighborhoods - large lots or small - where there may be houses of significant historical or architectural value.

Example: the San Rafael Hills area is in a hillside (emphasis mine) overlay zone that allows for building a garage in front of the lot. In fact, however, 801 south San Rafael is about as flat as a pancake. So now sits that massive bunker right in the front of the lot obscuring the house! Whatever happened to thinking about the reason for a rule before applying it?

The appeal should be denied.

Submitted as an individual,

Suzanne Gifford Weiss