

2022 MAY 23 AM 9:31

CITY CLERK
CITY OF PASADENA

May 23, 2022

City Council
City of Pasadena
100 North Garfield Ave.
Pasadena, CA 91101

Re: South Fair Oaks Specific Plan

The South Fair Oaks Specific Plan(SFOSP) is poised to change our city drastically in both positive and negative ways. While planning a city's growth can be exciting and challenging, it is important to always remember the key tenants of what makes our city so unique. I challenge you to question if this plan goes far enough to address the continuation of Pasadena's charm and what makes us so special. It is of my opinion this plan is designed well beyond city infrastructure capacities, neither enhances nor encourages a small-town feel, is not of an appropriate scale for the surrounding historic neighborhoods, encourages very little green space, and will still have a devastating cumulative impact on traffic with every major intersection surrounding the area despite recent efforts to fix this problem. While I do see the city's effort to improve the plan over the last two years, there are a few points I would like to make for your review. I think by addressing some of the following items, the negative aspects can be diminished-

- 1) The density and height at the corner of Filmore and Arroyo Parkway are too tall and dense due to the adjacency of single family homes on Marengo and the neighborhood of Madison Heights. The staff report states the plan focuses growth away from residential neighborhoods, yet in this case that goal is far from being met.
- 2) The new sidewalk widths and building setbacks are to be applauded. I am not certain though the five foot setback is enough to meet the goal of increasing the tree size canopy. While five feet is considerably better than the previous zero, I am not sure this minimal setback will actually help us meet the goal of enhancing a more prolific urban tree forest for the benefit of our city's future and the looming increase of the urban heat index. How can we encourage developers to leave even more room for trees? Is five feet enough for massive trees to grow for the generation of residents?
- 3) The change in open space requirements and tree planting standards are a positive step forward. It is commendable the city has required trees to be "in-ground" in order to count towards the tree requirement. I am still concerned the city has not taken further steps within the SFOSP to address the opportunity to use park and traffic impact fees from the future developments to create larger open green spaces with city owned property in the direct area. My hope is most of the acquired resources would be spent in the immediate area to address quality-of-life issues. Where will children play who will live in some of the the

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most dense buildings in the city? The SFOSP lacks walkable space where kids and families can kick or throw a ball. The staff should be required to show in the plan where larger open space will be accessed and what routes these individuals must take. I cannot imagine crossing Arroyo Parkway and California, the busiest intersection in our city, is appropriate for any child on a bike or foot attempting to access Allendale Park for baseball or the Blair High School pool for swim lessons.

- 4) The planning staff is right to not recommend the planning commission recommendations. Different rules for different developers will only wreak havoc on city process as we have seen in the past. We need just one set of guidelines and standards for the entire city when it comes to the consistency of trees, sidewalks, setbacks, and other policies goals. What the commission is proposing will be problematic because we will see different development standards for each parcel and our city public process will be disaster. I ask you to consider how it will work if every applicant can ask for different standards like we see with planned developments. The "flexibility" the commission is recommending will likely become a free for all. We must build a city where everybody has to follow the same rules, it should not be open for interpretation. All of a sudden developers are going to have "substantial hardships" and the issue becomes who determines the hardship and how? Is this a new city process?
- 5) Many organizations have called for a bike lane along Raymond for transit users, local residents and Art Center students to access Old Pasadena. As history has it, we actually had a cycleway on Raymond. The first 1.4 miles of a larger and more significant cycleway to extend to downtown Los Angeles opened on January 1, 1900. According to Dan Koeppel, an award-winning writer and cycling expert, the original start to the bike highway portion stretched roughly from the Hotel Green to near what is now the Glenarm Power Plant (see photo below). Wouldn't it be better to plan for a bikeway as part of the SFOSP versus attempting to install one later? Would this help ease the traffic and parking concerns for the future?

I challenge council to consider if this plan goes far enough to address all the future needs and desires of current and future Pasadena residents. While I do appreciate the city's effort to change many necessary and obvious mishaps, I do think the plan can do more. South Fair Oaks area is a wonderful blank slate and I hope this council makes every effort to stamp your vote in a way that the history of our city will forever remember your efforts and energy to create a plan that moves us into a new era. The quality-of-life for all must be front and center of how people will live, work and enjoy. It comes down to trees, traffic, transit and accessible space to put your feet on something green.

Thank you for your time,

Erika Foy

CURBED

LOS ANGELES



Linda Vista-Annandale Association
Pasadena, CA

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2022 MAY 23 AM 9: 59

CITY OF PASADENA
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Re: Council Meeting 5/22/2022; Agenda Item 16; South Fair Oaks Specific Plan Update

Mayor Gordo and Councilmembers,

The Linda Vista-Annandale Association (LVAA) supports the adoption of the Staff recommended South Fair Oaks Specific Plan Update. This proposed Specific Plan Update is innovative and visionary and has the potential to transform the South Fair Oaks area. In connection with our support, we do have the following comments with respect to specific Plan issues.

First, we strongly support the Staff recommendation NOT to adopt the Planning Commission recommendation to enable deviations from certain Plan development standards for commercial properties when it can be "clearly demonstrated that compliance with the standards would result in a substantial hardship." Such a provision is not good public policy in that it would undermine the intent, goals, and objectives of the Plan, and cause the South Fair Oaks Specific Plan Update to be inconsistent with prior recently adopted specific plan updates.

Second, while we accept the Planning Commission and Staff recommendations to study the implementation of a program related to public-private partnerships for the excellent Plan provisions concerning the creation of paseos and publicly accessible open space, LVAA suggests incorporating additional language requiring that any such program shall be publicly reviewed and approved by the Planning Commission and the Council.

Third, as to Plan provisions and Guidelines regarding Street Trees, while we would prefer that all proposed Specific Plan Updates are reviewed by the Urban Forestry Advisory Committee (UFAC) before Council consideration, we strongly support the "next best thing" included in this Plan: Implementation action IMS-1 on Page 127 of the Plan which addresses the issue of appropriate Street Tree selections, including the deficient current Street Tree choice on South Fair Oaks, by providing that Public Works and presumably UFAC will review the approved Street Trees for this Specific Plan area in "the near-term." LVAA supports this implementation measure and urges that this implementation action is taken promptly.

Thank you for your attention to our comments.

Sincerely,

Nina Chomsky

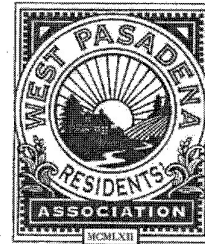
Nina Chomsky, LVAA President
cc: LVAA Board of Directors

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CITY OF PASADENA



May 23, 2022

Mayor Victor Gordo
Members of the City Council
City of Pasadena
VIA EMAIL

South Fair Oaks Specific Plan Update, Item 16, City Council May 23, 2022

The West Pasadena Residents' Association supports the recommendations of the Planning and Community Development Department in its report of May 23, 2022, and recommends adoption of the South Fair Oaks Specific Plan Update.

We wish to call your attention to the two recommendations made by a majority of the Planning Commission at its April 13, 2022 meeting, shown as the two bullet points on page 1 of the report:

- The first bullet suggests an implementation program in the SFOSP for public-private partnerships for the creation of paseos and publicly accessible open space.

WPRA supports study of PPP's for these purposes but suggests that a policy be reviewed in detail by the Planning Commission and Council prior to implementation, to permit adequate public review.

- The second bullet would include language in the SFOSP allowing the review authority to approve limited deviations from some development standards for commercial projects when it can be "clearly demonstrated that compliance with the standards would result in a substantial hardship."

WPRA strongly agrees with staff NOT to include this recommendation in the SFOSP. "Hardships" (not defined) will necessarily result from compliance with Pasadena's development standards because these standards require time, effort and money for compliance. Thus every project may claim that these standards pose "hardships." It is not difficult to imagine routine requests for deviations based on the widening and subjective definition of "hardships", to the increasing detriment of our planning and community goals.

Thank you for your consideration of our points of view.

Respectfully,

Dan Beal, President

The WPRA is an all-volunteer organization dedicated to maintaining and enhancing the quality of life in southwest Pasadena. We have over 1,000 paid members.

**WEST PASADENA RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION
POST OFFICE BOX 50252 • PASADENA, CA 91115**

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McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

From: David B.Coher
Sent: Monday, May 23, 2022 2:18 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Subject: Council Agenda Item 16 - South Fair Oak Specific Plan (SFOSP) Public Comment

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Hello. My name is David Coher and, as you may know, I am a member of the Planning Commission. I am writing on behalf of myself, not the Commission, to urge that you include the Commission's recommendation to add needed flexibility to this Specific Plan.

The Commission approved the Specific Plan only once this needed flexibility was added. Therefore, I disagree with Staff's proposal to remove this needed flexibility. Speaking for myself, I know that I would not have voted for the Specific Plan without this flexibility - which would have reduced the 5 - 2 vote to only 4 - 3. Further, I suspect, from discussions during the meeting, that several other members of the Planning Commission only voted for this Specific Plan because it included this needed flexibility and that without it, it would not have passed the Planning Commission. This is, after all, the role of the Planning Commission - to provide appropriate revisions to such documents and make the work of the Council easier.

The needed flexibility was added by the Planning Commission upon its review to ensure that the Specific Plan is not overly prescriptive and that the City has the ability to ensure the development envisioned by the Specific Plan. To strip out a fundamental element of the Specific Plan's approval - such as this needed flexibility - renders the Planning Commission's review moot and raises questions about the overall viability of the Specific Plan.

Therefore, on behalf of myself, I ask you to include the second bullet of the recommendation in the agenda before you, to -

"Incorporate language in the [South Fair Oaks Specific Plan] that would give the review authority the ability to approve limited deviations from development standards not including allowed height setbacks, or tree planting requirements, for commercial properties when it can be clearly demonstrated that compliance with the standards would result in a substantial hardship."

David B. Coher

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McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

From: John Latta
Sent: Monday, May 23, 2022 3:11 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Cc: Thyret, Pam; Wilson, Andy
Subject: Agenda Item 16 - SOUTH FAIR OAKS SPECIFIC

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Council Members:

The Madison Heights Neighborhood Association previously submitted a detailed letter regarding regarding The South Fair Oaks Specific Plan but we want to reiterate our main concerns.

We believe SWOT (Setbacks, Walkability, Open Space, Trees) are critical general concerns for the plan. We vehemently believe that a five foot setback is too small because trees could not be planted in the ground and walkability would be poor. We also want to step ups in height away from adjacent single family neighborhoods so new development doesn't loom over them.

Thanks for all your hard and good work.

John Latta

President, Madison Heights Neighbor Association

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Comments to the Pasadena City Council Regarding the Proposed South Fair Oaks Specific Plan

May 23, 2022

**Thomas Priestley, Ph.D., AICP/ASLA
40 West Glenarm Street, Pasadena, CA 91105
510.579.5606 urbanist.california@gmail.com**

Introduction

As a resident who lives just outside the boundaries of the South Fair Oaks Specific Plan planning area, I have been following the progress of the specific plan planning process with considerable interest, and I want to share a few of my thoughts about the proposed specific plan with you.

My perspective on the planning area is informed by the fact that I have been living at 40 West Glenarm Street, approximately 100 feet west of the planning area's boundary, for the past eight years. During my time on Glenarm Street, I have become familiar with the planning area through my frequent use of it as a pedestrian. In addition, my perspective on the area is informed by my professional training and experience. I have a Bachelor of Urban Planning degree and have master's degrees in city and regional planning and environmental planning, as well as a Ph.D., in environmental planning.

Because of my professional training, I have a long and continuing interest in the public's use of streets and the application of urban design measures to improve the livability and safety of streets for non-automotive users. In addition, much of my professional career has been devoted to analysis of the aesthetic issues posed by a range of large infrastructure projects, particularly electric generation and transmission facilities. Because power plant aesthetics has been so much of a focus of my professional life, I have some highly developed thoughts about the future use of the Glenarm and Broadway Power Plant sites, which are located less than a block down the street from my house and whose stacks are visible from my property.

My Thoughts in Brief About the Proposed Specific Plan

Overall, my assessment is that this plan is sound and that its policies have for the most part been carefully thought through. I strongly support the land use development concept that has been prepared, which capitalizes on the area's locational assets, provides for the growth of the medical center and the Art Center campus, and responds to the City's and the region's housing needs while at the same time respecting the area's heritage structures and existing residential

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areas. I am especially supportive of the plan's provisions that will permit the development of high-density housing in the planning area, particularly in the corridor along South Raymond Avenue. The proposed high-density housing, along with the Plan's urban design provisions will make it possible to take advantage of the extraordinarily high level of accessibility by public transit in this corridor and the proximity to Old Pasadena, Central Park, Huntington Hospital and the cluster of medical uses around it, and the Art Center South Campus to develop an urbane, dense, pedestrian oriented district.

Need for More Detail About Making South Raymond Avenue a Complete Street

Unfortunately, the plan is not specific enough in its implementation measures to ensure realization of the potential of South Raymond Avenue. Because of the density of the housing that is being proposed along the street, the mixed land uses, the presence of the Art Center campus and its dormitories housing 800 students, and the high level of public transportation service, South Raymond Avenue has all the ingredients to become a street with a lively pedestrian life. The plan's text should be amended to specifically state that the vision for South Raymond Avenue is that it should become a street on which automobile traffic is de-emphasized in favor of public transportation and active transportation. A statement that indicates that protected bike lanes should be located on this street should also be included. Map 5.1-1 in the version of the plan now under consideration proposes 15-foot sidewalks for South Raymond Avenue. To be consistent with the vision of South Raymond Avenue as an active transportation corridor, this map should be amended to indicated sidewalk widths of 22 feet or 25 feet.

In addition, I request that you amend the plan's implementation actions for Infrastructure, Mobility, and Sustainability specified in Section 7.1 to be more specific about the need to develop and adopt a design plan to turn South Raymond Avenue into a street with a high level of amenity that prioritizes active transportation.

One way to achieve this would be to revise Implementation Action IMS-4, which now reads:

IMS-4 Streetscape Program

Explore opportunities to develop a Streetscape Program for Raymond Avenue, including improvements that address pedestrian amenities, such as seating, in alignment with DOT's Pedestrian Plan.

To ensure a more comprehensive and definitive implementation action regarding South Raymond Avenue, please revise this Implementation Action to read:

IMS-4 Complete Streets and Streetscape Program for South Raymond Avenue

Develop a Complete Streets and Streetscape Plan for South Raymond Avenue that will convert the street to a corridor that emphasizes active transportation and provides a high level of amenity. The plan's provisions should include reduction of the number of automotive travel lanes, reduction of space devoted to on-street parking, provision of amenities at public transit stops, development of a protected cycle track, creation of a series of broad pedestrian plazas

that provide for safe circulation for pedestrians and amenities for the residents of the area's future high-density housing, for students at the Art Center's South Campus, and for workers at and visitors to the area's medical facilities. The streetscape program should include a substantial increase in the number of trees planted in the corridor to provide ecological benefits, increase shade and amenity, and screen the views looking south down the street toward the Glenarm Power Plant.

More Planning is Required for the Glenarm Power Plant Site

The proposed plan's analysis and land use prescriptions for the "Institutional Flex" area seem weak and incomplete. First, the name given to this area "Institutional Flex" does not recognize or do justice to the fact that all the land in this area is owned by Pasadena Water and Power and has been used for electric power production for a very long time and is likely to be a valuable resource for meeting Pasadena's utility needs in the future. The name for this area should be changed to "Glenarm and Broadway Power Plant Sites" to provide the public with a better understanding of what this area is.

The plan doesn't document any communication or coordination between Planning staff and the staff of the PWP responsible for managing these two power plant properties or planning their future. More time and effort is required to prepare a plan for this area. Given that, I suggest that strong consideration be given to treating this area the same way that the Huntington Hospital properties are treated - designating this area as one where "Land Uses Shall be Specified by a Conditional Use Permit or Master Plan".

I also suggest that the implementation section for the Glenarm and Broadway Power plant Sites area include a provision that requires Planning and PWP to collaborate to evaluate the existing conditions on these two sites, the existing uses, PWP's anticipated use of the existing facilities, and PWP's future needs that could be accommodated on the site. The implementation measure should further require that based on these analyses, PWP and Planning should develop a long-term framework plan for the site to guide its future development to meet Pasadena's utility needs, and to the extent that there are any buildings or land areas that are not needed for utility use, that they be designated for uses that support the land uses and activities in the nearby areas of the South Fair Oaks Specific Plan area. An important element of the long-term plan is a plan for the aesthetic enhancement of the two power plant sites that define Pasadena's southern gateway and now have some adverse aesthetic impacts on the areas around them.

To achieve this, I request that you revise Implementation Action PA-3 in Section 7.1 of the plan document.

This Implementation Action now reads:

PA-4 Visioning for Glenarm Power Plant (sic)

Collaborate amongst city departments to explore future Glenarm Power Plant improvements and adaptive reuse potential, including long-term visioning and planning for the site.

PA-4 Visioning for the Glenarm and Broadway Power Plant Sites

Planning and PWP staff are directed to collaborate to evaluate the existing conditions on the Glenarm and Broadway Power plant sites, the existing uses, PWP's anticipated use of the existing facilities, and PWP's future needs that could be accommodated on the site. Based on these analyses, PWP and Planning should develop a long-term framework plan for the site to guide its future development to meet Pasadena's utility needs, and to the extent that there are any buildings or land areas that are not needed for utility use, that they be designated for uses that support the land uses and activities in the nearby areas of the South Fair Oaks Specific Plan area.

I also request that you revise Implementation Action PA-5, which now reads:

PA-5: Glenarm Power Plant (sic) Gateway

Explore opportunities to transform the Glenarm Power Plant into an artistic landmark and create a southern gateway to the City at Glenarm and Arroyo Parkway through public art.

"Public art" is probably not the right strategy for improving the appearance of the Glenarm and Broadway Power Plant sites and turning them into a positive gateway into Pasadena for travelers on the Pasadena Parkway and Fair Oaks Boulevard. It would be more effective to develop a comprehensive design plan for the two sites that includes removing the now defunct Broadway power plant and its cooling tower, which are large, highly visible, and not particularly attractive structures, and planting rows of Canary Island palms along the sites' Arroyo Parkway and Glenarm Street edges to partially screen views into the site, and to create a landmark landscape element with positive associations.

Please revise Implementation PA-5 to read:

PA-5: Glenarm and Broadway Power Plant Aesthetic Enhancement Plan

In conjunction with the development of the comprehensive plan for the Glenarm and Broadway Power Plant sites, prepare an aesthetic treatment plan for these sites. This plan should consider removing facilities like the Broadway Power Plant and its cooling tower that are no longer being used for their original purposes. It should also include landscape and paint treatments to improve the site's appearance in views seen by nearby residents and by travelers entering Pasadena. The landscape treatment should include planting rows of Canary Island palms along the Arroyo Parkway and Glenarm Street edges of the site.

McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

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Sent: Monday, May 23, 2022 4:23 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Subject: Today's City Council Meeting - Agenda Item 16 - South Fair Oaks Specific Plan - Public Comment.

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May 23, 2022

Mayor Victor Gordo
Members of the City Council
City of Pasadena
Via Email

RE: South Fair Oaks Specific Plan

Dear Mayor and Councilmembers,

The draft South Fair Oaks Specific Plan is well thought out and well-presented, and clearly the successful product of many hours of hard work by many people. I think it has the potential to re-envision and revitalize south-west Pasadena. It brings housing to areas of the plan while downplaying and downzoning commercial development in some of the same areas. It significantly increases setbacks, open space requirements, and design standards.

When it was presented a week before being sent to the Planning Commission, the draft included numerous changes over previous drafts. As no summary of changes was provided, it wasn't necessarily easy for everyone to give these changes the attention necessarily warranted on short notice.

During the Planning Commission hearing, there was discussion about some of the potential and serious issues that could arise with the draft, and how to handle them. The Planning Commission felt it was important that relevant the review authority be given the ability to approve limited "deviations from development standards not including allowed height setbacks, or tree planting requirements, for commercial properties when it can be clearly demonstrated that compliance with the standards would result in a substantial hardship."

In the version released this week, there are more changes that aren't immediately obvious without an in depth review. Some of the dozens of changes I noticed on this new version today included further tuning of sidewalk setbacks in the innovation district between Del Mar and California west of Fair Oaks, a difference in how an area south of Huntington Hospital is handled around Alessandro, other substantive changes, and numerous minor fixes and clarifications.

However, anything as complex as a specific plan is rarely perfect or always clear, and this draft, with some of the most dramatic changes in the city is no exception. There will be issues that will be found in it in addition to those fixed in the latest draft, language that in hindsight will lack clarity, and other unforeseen things not accounted for.

The safety valve as proposed by the Planning Commission is limited in scope. It shouldn't be seen as scary but instead as an opportunity that will help allow the City of Pasadena to bring greatness to the South Fair Oaks Specific Plan area.

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Thank you for your consideration of these issues.

Greg McLemore

Long-time resident, Madison Heights

Long-time believer and investor in the potential of south Raymond and Fair Oaks.



May 23, 2022

Mayor Victor Gordo
Members of the City Council
City of Pasadena

Dear Mayor Gordo and Council members,

HMRI supports the adoption of the recommended changes to the South Fair Oaks Specific Plan made by the Planning Commission following the April 13, 2022 meeting. Specifically, HMRI would like to highlight the importance of keeping the second recommendation:

- *Incorporate language in the SFORSP that would give the review authority the ability to approve limited deviations from the development standards not including allowed height, setbacks, or tree planting requirements for commercial properties when it can be clearly demonstrated that compliance with the standards would result in substantial hardship.*

Adopting this recommendation provides a safety net for both the property owners and the city for when zoning creates unintended hardships. The specificity of the SFOSP does not have a mechanism to evaluate special circumstances in the event of hardships created by the guidelines and requirements. Adding in language to grant limited deviations for clearly demonstrable hardships creates the flexibility needed to address those unforeseen circumstances at the time of development.

HMRI is excited at all the possibilities that the new SFOSP might create and supports the continued effort to grow this area into the H.E.A.R.T district. Adopting the recommendations from the Planning Commission, the SFOSP can become the guide to building a positive, pedestrian friendly, economic hub for the city.

Respectfully,
Mark Dixon
VP of Laboratory and Facilities Operations



686 S. Fair Oaks Ave.
Pasadena CA 91105

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