

CORRESPONDENCE

McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

From: Buff Gontier
Sent: Wednesday, March 4, 2026 11:23 AM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Subject: 511 S Oak Knoll Appeal

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The building as planned would destroy the neighborhood's ambiance and dominate the area, not in a good way. We are surrounded by some of Pasadena's prized bungalows as well as a historic fire station charmingly altered as a residence. The four stories would threaten light sources for its neighbors as well as its own residents on the first floor. McKinley School and the Eliot Arts Magnet School on the street, as well as all residents, would suffer congestion from the added traffic created. It would be a safety issue for children. Development of the lot for additional housing is desirable but needs to be carefully designed for its new residents and those of us who are long-time residents.

Buff Gontier

McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

From: Thomas Tai ·
Sent: Wednesday, March 4, 2026 5:03 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Subject: Support for 511 S. Oak Knoll Project

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Hello:

I am writing to express my strong support for the proposed project at 511 S. Oak Knoll that is before the council on March 9, 2026.

I have heard many objections to this project based on its design or perceived lack of conformity with the surrounding neighborhood. As someone who lives just blocks away, I hear those concerns. But I am compelled to place the greater welfare of the city above my personal architectural preferences.

Pasadena is facing a crisis of unreliable federal support, structural deficits, and a school district on the verge of takeover. We must build more housing to increase our tax base and enrollment in PUSD. Furthermore, the housing crisis is continuing, with so many Pasadenans being rent burdened and barely hanging on above the abyss of homelessness.

For these reasons, I urge the council to let this project go forward and break ground. We must prioritize substantive action like building housing, not abstract worries and concerns that do not immediately address the public good.

Yours very sincerely,
Thomas Tai
Pasadena Resident and Voter

McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

From: Lisa Jacobs <
Sent: Sunday, March 8, 2026 3:55 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Cc: 511.not.okay@gmail.com; Amanda Elioff
Subject: 511 S. Oak Knoll Ave. APPEAL

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Dear Pasadena City Council members,

I am a 12-year resident of S. Oak Knoll Avenue. I support more housing. And, the vacant lot at 511 S. Oak Knoll is a perfect place for a multi-unit building.

But, let's build something there that will hold its value. Let's build something (like the surrounding complexes) that, years from now, investors will be proud to own.

As currently designed, I fear that, after their initial investment, residents will be offloading condo units at below-market value. Not good for them; not good for the neighborhood; not good for Pasadena.

Here's why you should vote in favor of the appellants on March 23:

- **Odd, exterior hallways cause light pollution for neighbors and a lack of natural light for residents of 511**
- **Over-engineering these hallways causes a skinny, unusable interior courtyard for residents of 511**
- **This interior courtyard gives minimal space for gardens for all to enjoy**
- **The minimal five-foot setback decreases green space and interferes with an historic, protected oak tree**

Please don't let his oddly designed structure set a precedent for future Pasadena complexes. There are plenty of examples of tasteful, thoughtfully designed newer structures all around our city.

Don't let 511 open the door to compromise for our great city.

Sincerely,

Lisa Jacobs

Pasadena, CA. 91101

Robles, Sandra

From: Debbie Tannenbaum
Sent: Saturday, March 14, 2026 6:09 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Subject: Proposed Project at 511 S.Oak Knoll Ave.

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Dear Councilmembers:

Re: 511 S.Oak Knoll Ave., Pas. 91101

HEALTH AND SAFETY:

Children and adults cross this street every day, multiple times a day.

Children play on the field.

Their privacy will be impacted with more people walking by. The noise level on the street, and air pollution, danger of speeding cars, all impact the growing emotional needs of the children.

The health and safety of our children and everyone is very important!

Cars speed down the street south from DelMar to California bypassing Lake (5stops) to the freeways.

After school activities for soccer, softball, band practice increase street crossings and liabilities!

SCHOOLS PROXIMITIES:

1. McKinley Elementary (NW corner oak Knoll)
2. Eliot Performing Arts Magnet Jr HS (South And next to McKinley)
3. Rose HS (NE corner Oak Knoll ave)
4. Pasadena Unified School District Offices (So. And E of Rose Hills)

PEOPLE DENSITY:

At least 100 more people will be living on this street.

CAR DENSITY: 64 underground parking spaces are not sufficient for 48 more units. More cars will need to park on the limited street allowance.

STREET PARKING LIMITATIONS:

Currently there is limited parking for 2 hours/day either side of street.

NEIGHBORHOOD AESTHETICS And DENSITY):

This project as presently planned is considerably over the existing height limitation and density of comparable properties.

I believe height must be reduced to a three story height limitation with a corresponding reduction to 36 to 38 units. This would be more compatible with the neighborhood.

Constructing 48 units on a this small parcel, (approximately 25,830 sq. ft.), allocates only 538 sq. ft. per unit,

Whereas comparable condominiums, 500 S. Oak Knoll Ave for example, have 48 units on a 43,560 sq. ft. parcel, with 889 sq. ft. per unit.

I believe the council must consider these limitations and reduce the allowable units allocated for this proposed project to be compatible with current neighborhood density.

TRAFFIC FLOW:

Speed bumps requested a few years ago. The first test was not completed due to a faulty non-working test.

The 2nd test was near the cross walk of the school at 8am when children were walking into school and cars stopping and leaving.

No accurate reading completed.

Cars sometimes speed down the 3 block-long street up to 45 mph on a School Zone Street!!!

SCHOOLS BUSES: come and go daily

In Conclusion:

Too dense.

Too unsafe.

No parking.

Structurally not aesthetic.

Sincerely,

Deborah Tannenbaum

Pediatric Nurse: Children's Hospital, LAC/USC

Special Educator, MA: LAUSD, PCC

ESL, MA: Glendale Community College

Robles, Sandra

From: David Fairris
Sent: Monday, March 16, 2026 3:23 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Subject: re: the proposed development at 511 s. oak knoll

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TO: Members of the City Council of Pasadena

FR: David Fairris, 534 S. Oak Knoll, Unit 106

RE: The Proposed Development at 511 S. Oak Knoll

I have been an active participant in opposition to the proposed development at 511 since seeing the plans. I believe in the need for more low-income housing and more housing in general, and am not opposed to a large building that accomplishes these goals existing in my neighborhood – in this case, directly across the street from me. The major problem is the design of this building. It is too close to the property lines, has hallways that are on the exterior of the building which will shed light into the neighborhood all night long (instead of windows with people and pets and lamps and blinds), is wholly inconsistent with the neighborhood's character, and has problematic ancillary effects on noise, traffic, parking and perhaps a beloved neighborhood tree.

Nothing can be done about the fact that the proposal is to build a 46-unit, 4-floor condominium – a huge structure that will tower over a neighborhood with many single-family residences and much smaller condominiums (mine, for example, is 18 units). The State "density bonus" grants the developer this; the City's hands are tied. But, the design of the building does not have to be relinquished in the mix. And the ancillary damage to traffic, noise, and possible harm to our cherished neighborhood tree should not be shrugged off. I feel that the City's Design Commission and various departments under the Planning Commission, including the departments that handle traffic and noise, have been largely unresponsive to the community's concerns.

Regarding design, I attended the Design Commission meeting assuming that this Committee would act on its charter principles – namely, to ensure that "new construction supports the best of the City's architectural traditions," "reflects the values of the community," "visually harmonizes with its surroundings," and "possesses excellence in design and not poor-quality development." It is my view that the Design Commission did not take its charter to heart. The Commissioners seemed to be generally unhappy with the proposal, but apparently (and incorrectly in my view) seemed to feel that, just because their hands were tied by the State "density bonus" regarding the four stories or limited parking or number of units, they also could not object to

the ways in which it violated the basic tenets set out above. At one point, in fact, there was a discussion of an elementary redesign to bring some greenery to the exterior of the building, reducing the mostly-hidden green interior, but the developer openly refused, and that was that. The final vote was underwhelming to say the least.

What should be done in this case is to shrink the building footprint, to bring the trees and shrubs to the exterior of the building rather than the interior, to move the hallways into the interior, and to use materials and designs that can be found at present in the neighborhood. (For example, compare the new development at 150 SOK to its even newer counterpart directly across the street at 139 SOK. The latter has new greenery and tasteful siding and balconies, all of which fit nicely into the surrounding neighborhood – indeed, it seems to be modeled directly after a building just north of it).

In addition, there has been little support from the various City departments involving matters related to noise, parking, and traffic concerns. Regarding traffic in particular, the City's traffic department study found no negative impact on the neighborhood as a result of the new development, short of the need for some fix to the left-hand turn lane onto Lake from Del Mar. Really? That's it? This finding borders on the absurd. The neighborhood already faces at least one major traffic problem at present – namely, the long line of cars along the southern portion of S. Oak Knoll, and the resulting honking and screams of unhappiness, as the car in front of the line waits to either go left or straight between 2 and 6 pm, in clear violation of the law. What will this mess be like as perhaps 70 new cars (46 units times 1.5 cars) are added to our neighborhood as a result of this development, not to speak of the additional cars already associated with the new Eliot Arts magnet school on the campus of McKinley School? I have written to both the traffic department in the City and to the police department with evidence that the "right turn only" sign during certain times of day at S. Oak Knoll and California is being violated repeatedly. I sent a series of time-stamped photos showing, over a 10-minute time span, that 6 cars either went left or straight at this intersection, in clear violation of the law. I have heard nothing back from either agency.

I hereby request that the City Council return the proposal to the Design Commission and embolden them to act with conviction on their chartered mandates, most of which form the basis for the neighbors' objections as well. And I request that the City Council return the reports from the noise and traffic departments and ask that they delve more deeply into the possible impacts of this development and respond to the concerns of constituents who question the findings they have offered.

McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

From: Roger Servick <>
Sent: Wednesday, March 18, 2026 5:09 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Cc: 511.not.okay@gmail.com
Subject: 511 S. Oak Knoll appeal

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March 18, 2026

TO: Correspondence@cityofpasadena.net
CC: 511.not.okay@gmail.com
SUBJECT: 511 S. Oak Knoll appeal

As a 30 year resident of Pasadena, I am aware that sometimes our planning department's efforts to preserve the integrity of our neighborhoods become overwhelmed with what seems to be a good idea at the time, but as years go by, they end up being the cornerstone of a sterile, claustrophobic depression on this city's landscape. Before that happens, I would like to add my individual voice in support of this neighborhood's efforts to preserve what has been and should continue to be, a desirable place to live. I cannot allow the opportunist's for profit efforts to go unchallenged. I stand opposed to this proposal as currently being considered and request that an alternate plan be adapted that blends in with the existing character of its surroundings rather than replace it with the brutality of its design.

Respectfully,

Roger Servick

Pasadena, CA 91105

McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

From: Nancy Goble
Sent: Wednesday, March 18, 2026 5:55 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Subject: 511 S. Oak Knoll Appeal

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Hello Council members,

The proposed development at 511 S. Oak Knoll was approved by the Design Commission in October 2025 and is the subject of an appeal that is being considered by the City Council on March 23, 2026. Please do not approve this project as it has been forwarded to the Council from the Design Commission. Honor the appeal.

There is no doubt that additional housing is needed in Pasadena. While this project does add housing units, it has many negative attributes. One of the many troubling aspects of this development is that the concerns raised by residents in the area have been largely ignored by the developer. Possible solutions were offered to address many of the concerns. Minimal changes have been made to the original design and the concerns remain.. There is no indication that potential solutions were even examined. Is that the same response that can be expected by residents if there are issues during the building process? I fear that may well be the case.

While the surrounding neighborhood has some variety in architectural and design styles, the current design, as approved, stands in harsh contrast to structures in the area. The materials, the angular design and the outdoor walkways to access the units are just a few of those incongruous design features. If allowed to move forward as approved by the Design Commission, these features could well have a negative impact on the housing values of existing homes in the area as well as the resale value of units at 511 S. Oak Knoll.

There is also legitimate concern regarding increased traffic and parking constraints. While a traffic study was conducted, it took place prior to the addition of Eliot Arts Magnet School to the McKinley school campus, which was necessitated following the fires in January 2025. The addition of more students has already increased traffic on South Oak Knoll. Adding 46 more homes with the number of proposed parking spaces in the development, will likely strain the availability of street parking in the area.

Do the right thing for Pasadena and the neighborhood. Do not allow this project to move forward in its current state. Allowing it to move forward is deleterious to this neighborhood but also has the potential to set a precedent for other future projects to be approved that ignore the impact on the existing neighborhood and the legitimate concerns raised by residents during the approval process.

Nancy and Marwin Goble

McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

From: Takeda, Michi
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2026 9:26 AM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Subject: FW: Appeal - 511 South Oak Knoll
Attachments: Planning Commission re 511 S Oak Knoll 46 units.pdf

This is Public Comment for 511 S. Oak Knoll Ave, CC on 3/23.

From: [shaunac](#)
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2026 9:01 AM
To: Cisneros, Stephanie <scisneros@cityofpasadena.net>
Subject: Appeal - 511 South Oak Knoll

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Dear Ms. Cisneros:

Please accept this letter regarding the 46-unit project at 511 South Oak Knoll.

Thank you.

Shauna Clark

Pasadena, CA 91106

*Leon Bitting and Shauna Clark
696 E. California Boulevard
Pasadena, CA 91106
shaunaclark1@gmail.com*

Sent via email to commentspc@cityofpasadena.net

March 18, 2026

Pasadena Planning Commissioners
Planning & Community Development Department
Planning Division
175 N Garfield Ave
Pasadena, CA 91101

Dear Members of the Planning Commission:

We write about the impact of the proposed development at 511 South Oak Knoll Avenue. A 42% density bonus has resulted in a project of 46 residential units within a 47,360-square-foot building rising 47 feet, 10 inches in height on a 26,370-square-foot infill parcel.

It appears that the density bonus was an incentive for the inclusion of five affordable units and one moderately affordable unit within the development. In practical terms, the project receives a 42.5% increase in density to gain only a 15% increase in units.

While we recognize the importance of affordable housing, the scale and configuration of the proposed building raise serious compatibility concerns. The building would rise nearly 48 feet in height only five feet, three inches from surrounding property lines, placing the tallest structure on the block next to a historic residential property. The project necessarily includes exterior lighting that will spill onto surrounding properties. Residents will also experience the noise impacts from HVAC equipment, increased residential activity, and additional traffic generated by the project.

Also, there is a public safety concern. We have a single-family home on the south side of California, just west of Oak Knoll Avenue. Over the past several years, our neighbors and we have effectively become first responders to motorists involved in collisions at the intersection of Oak Knoll Avenue and California Boulevard. These accidents typically occur when southbound drivers on Oak Knoll attempt to cross California Boulevard without realizing there is a fourth lane of traffic. According to City records, the intersection has averaged three significant collisions per year over the past five years. Many collisions are severe enough that vehicles leave the roadway and land in front yards or on sidewalks along the south side of California near Oak Knoll.

The City is requiring improvements to the signal at Del Mar Boulevard and Lake Avenue due to the project's anticipated increase in daily vehicle trips. However, the dominant flow of traffic on Oak Knoll is southbound, since both the schools and the proposed development are on the west side. While traffic engineering falls within the purview of Public Works, we ask the Commission to remain mindful of the

likely increase in southbound vehicles attempting to turn left or cross California Boulevard from Oak Knoll Avenue.

Pasadena has long prided itself on thoughtful urbanism—growth that is contextual, appropriately scaled, and responsive to place. That principle becomes especially important when new development is located adjacent to designated landmark resources, as is the case here.

While California law allows certain incentives when affordable units are provided, it does not require approval of every requested concession, particularly where a local decision-making body determines that a concession would create specific adverse impacts on public health, safety, or the physical environment, or would conflict with the protection of historic resources. The Planning Commission therefore retains important discretion in how density bonus provisions are implemented on this site.

We want to be clear that our concern is not the inclusion of affordable housing. The issue is that the project, as currently configured, is overbuilt for this location. We respectfully ask the Commission to consider returning the project for redesign. The affordable housing component should remain, but the overall number of units should be reduced so that the building's scale is more compatible with the surrounding neighborhood and nearby historic resources.

If the Commission chooses instead to retain the 42.5% density bonus, we respectfully request that you approve the design modifications proposed by the appellants. Their recommendations are thoughtful, measured, and represent a reasonable attempt to mitigate the impacts that this development will impose on them.

Thank you for your careful consideration of this request and for your continued commitment to ensuring that Pasadena's growth remains both thoughtful and compatible with the character of its neighborhoods.

Sincerely,

Leon Bitting and Shauna Clark

Leon Bitting and Shauna Clark

McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

From: Brian Taylor <
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2026 10:31 AM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Cc: Ryan Prosser; andrew.rodriquez; steve.meyer; Cisneros, Stephanie
Subject: Oak Knoll (DHP2024-00261) - Response to Appeal
Attachments: Applicant Response to Appeal - Architecture - Oak Knoll.pdf; Applicant Response to Appeal - Noise Reflection - Oak Knoll.pdf

Importance: High

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Hello, please see attached Applicant Response to Comments for the Appellant's appeal 511 South Oak Knoll Avenue (DHP2024-00261). The Response to Comments is for the upcoming City Council hearing on 3/23. Can you please confirm receipt of the two attachments?

Sincerely,

Brian Taylor

Brian Fulcher and Amanda Eloff

Pasadena CA 91101

, 07 Nov 2025

Pasadena Planning & Community Development Department
Pasadena Permit Center
175 Garfield Avenue
Pasadena, CA 91101

Attention: Stephanie Cisneros and Kevin Johnson

Subject: 511 South Oak Knoll Avenue, Pasadena, CA
Proposed Multi-Family Development
Request for Appeal of 28 Oct 2025 Design Commission Decision of the Concept Design

Dear Mr. Johnson and Ms. Cisneros

This letter provides our written *Request for Appeal* of the decision by the Pasadena Design Commission (Design Commission) to move forward with the *Concept Design* for the proposed multi-family development located at 511 S. Oak Knoll Avenue in Pasadena. Please find attached, a completed Request for Appeal form (Appendix A), signed by Brian Fulcher and Amanda Eloff (Appellants). We reside in the single-family home located at 541 S. Oak Knoll Avenue, immediately adjacent to the proposed property development. Concurrence with this Request for Appeal from many of our neighbors on S. Oak Knoll Avenue is demonstrated by the list of signatures attached (Appendix B).

Our appeal of the decision made at the Public Hearing on 28 Oct 25 at the Pasadena City Hall is based on objections to the Design Commission's Findings presented in the City's letter to Burke Farrar of Odyssey Development Services (the Applicant) on 29 Oct 2025:

- » **Findings For Concept Design approve/:** The design as accepted does not comply with the Design Guidelines for Neighborhood Commercial and Multi-Family Residential Districts (Design Guidelines) as stated in the City's Findings for Concept Design Approval.
- « **Environmental Determination.** Environmental impacts/effects from noise, light, traffic, and parking, street lighting, trash collection and other previously noted concerns have not been adequately studied or addressed in the Conditions of Approval. The reports also contain several errors that would likely contribute to incorrect conclusions and decisions.
- **Findings j'or Col*tr!''ance with the Tree Protection Ordinance:** The City's Tree Protection Ordinance is cited for the City's trees, however, protection of the tree "OS1" is not sufficiently addressed in the design or the Conditions of Approval.

These points are more fully detailed in this letter and its Attachments.

Given the above, and the extremely short review process for the Design Commission and the public (3 Business Days) we find it essential to appeal the Design Commission decision so that the Concept Design can be more fully reviewed. We further articulate the reasons and provide constructive ideas for improvement of the proposed development in this letter and its Attachments.

In addition to the objections to the Staff and Design Commissions findings, we also object to the apparent lack of consideration of public comment and response to those comments. We count over 20 letters and E-mails providing comments and concerns by the community. Comments were also given in person at the Preliminary and Concept Design Review Hearings (Appendix D). As we understood from the City's announcements of the Public Hearing for the proposed building development, we were expecting to offer comments in a public forum on a Concept Design submitted by the Applicant and represented on drawings that were labelled, "*Concept Design*". Relying on AIA references, a *Concept Design* may be described as follows.

"Concept design is the initial phase of architectural design where the architect explores high-level ideas, vision, and basic layout through sketches, models, and diagrams to answer fundamental questions about purpose, function, and form. This process involves analyzing the site, understanding client needs, developing a core concept statement, and creating initial visualizations that form the foundational framework for the project before moving on to more detailed design stages".

While listening to the dialogue at the hearing between the Commission and the Applicant, it became very clear that both the Applicant and the Commission were reticent to make any substantive changes to the submitted Concept Design, notwithstanding the significant issues, errors, and overall lack of respect the design had for the immediate neighborhood. This has been the universal outcry from the residents of S. Oak Knoll (and beyond) since the Preliminary Design was first exhibited in September 2024, at the Preliminary Design Review Public Hearing, during informal discussions with the developer in December 2024, informal meetings with City Staff, and numerous letters and E-mails from the community.

In spite of all the meetings and comments, there were no substantive changes made to the Preliminary Design and subsequently represented on the Concept Design, even though the Commission in September 2024 had remarked that the Applicant "had a lot of work to do" and to significantly rethink its approach to the building to better fit into the community and architectural context of the neighborhood.

We seek to correct a design that fails on several design standards of excellence to achieve a positive relationship with the neighborhood and a design that better relates to the existing historical landmarks and residential density. So much of what we and our neighbors have commented on starting 14 months ago remains unattended, uncorrected, and consequently, the Concept Design remains substantially out of context with the community. As stated on the City's website, the Commission is:

(an) Advisory of the City Council on the establishment of design standards, criteria, concepts and policies for the implementation of public and private projects. Reviews projects for the purpose of creating uniform design concepts and to ensure the maintenance of design excellence

To this end, we looked to the Commission's experience and guidance to positively influence design and function related aspects of the proposed 511 S. Oak Knoll Avenue development that is virtually surrounded by landmark designated and historical buildings, homes and residential buildings ranging in height from 1 to 3 stories, and more importantly, buildings less than 40 feet high. Instead, the project design ignores the requirements presented in the City's Design Guidelines — particularly those related to Block Character and Relating to Neighbors by massing and scale (page 30 of Design Guidelines inserted below for ease of reference): None of these recommendations have been addressed, and it is, therefore, difficult to find "design excellence" represented in the Concept Design submitted to the Commission. The City of Pasadena prides itself on design excellence and green space, this design will not provide that. For reference, please see excerpt from Block Character, Section 5 of the Design Guidelines for Neighborhood Commercial & Multi-Family Districts (Adopted by the City of Pasadena) page 30, next page.

Response 1. The appellant describes the neighborhood as being virtually surrounded by landmark designated and historic buildings. While the immediate neighbor to the south is such, the rest of the buildings along this block of Oak Knoll Avenue are not listed on the Central District Specific Plan's Map 2.1-2, nor is this neighbor listed as a historic district. Instead, this block of Oak Knoll is a wide mix of buildings from various decades and ranges in size and height. With the tallest existing buildings being not 3 but 4 stories in height if the mostly above-grade garages are included. This block is also unique in having many different uses, including single family, multi-family, commercial (offices on the corner of California and Oak Knoll) and institutional (McKinley School).

While the attached Request for Appeal form briefly summarizes the reasons for appeal, the following provides a summary of the key points, issues and suggested corrective actions that in our view are needed to amend the Concept Design before proceeding further. These would address community comments to mitigate severe and pervasive impacts and improve construction efficiency Appendices E - K to this letter provide additional basis for appeal related to environmental and safety concerns.

Summary of the Appeal

The basis for this Request for Appeal is focused not *only* on the Concept Design, but also on what appear to be errors, and inconsistencies found in the documents ("450 pages) provided only three Business Days in advance of the 28 Oct 2025 Public Hearing for Design Commission review and public comments. These documents were the basis of a decision by the Design Commission on the proposed Concept Design that the Appellant (and neighbors listed in Appendix B) And significantly non-compliant w'ith the written goals of the City of Pasadena, are incomplete with respect to environmental mitigations, and contain some errors. As such, the project will be detrimental to the S. Oak Knoll Avenue community. The design lacks respect for the community's block character and will present environmental impacts if not satisfactorily mitigated. While this is not a formal legal complaint, it comes after an intensive "page-turn" assessment of the City of Pasadena provided documents representing the Concept Design and written after a review in a very compressed period of time.

We seek reasonable adjustments to the proposed Concept Design with a minimum delay or *costs* to the Applicant. We also consider it reasonable to seek a refund of the Appeal filing fee once the Commission reviews our collective observations, findings and recommendations in this matter as substantially described in this letter and all Attachments. Had the Applicant fulfilled its responsibilities when submitting its Preliminary and Concept Designs, much of the enclosed discussion would have been addressed and finalized.

V. Block Character

7. RELATING TO NEIGHBORS BY PASSING AND SCALE

New buildings over two stories in height should respect adjacent buildings by responding to their massing, scale, and need for light, natural ventilation, and views.

Recommendations:

7.1 Scale Buildings should be scaled to respond to their context by sensitively and positively addressing the scale and massing of their adjacent neighbors. This can be accomplished by:

- Matching existing building heights or exceeding them by only one story. Additional stories should be modular by stories.
- Creating side yard and rear yard setbacks to provide as much distance as possible between the facades of a proposed building and existing buildings in order to preserve the privacy of the outdoor spaces of both.
- Orienting the side yards of proposed buildings to face the side yards of adjacent buildings.
- Including elements such as porches, balconies, arcades, etc. to relate the scale of facades to those of existing buildings.
- Reducing building footprint by introducing dwelling space in attic spaces.
- Introducing landscape and/or trees as a screen between existing and new buildings.

7.2 Side and rear elevations. The rear and side elevations of new buildings that are visible from the public realm should be designed with equal care and quality as the front or principal facade.

7.3 Side and rear windows. The placement and size of windows in side yards and rear yards should respect the privacy and need for light and air of existing buildings.

7.4 Existing site features. Unique natural characteristics such as mature trees and topography, on both the project site and adjacent sites should be respected and taken into account in new building design.

7.5 Multiple Lot Projects. The massing of projects on combined lots should be broken down into increments that relate to surrounding buildings. On very large lots, the division of projects into two or more separate buildings of different type, density, height, and massing is encouraged.

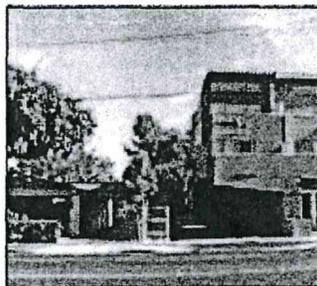
Discussion:

Buildings designed in isolation and without regard to their surroundings can appear to be glaringly out of context. This is especially true when large mixed-use or multi-family infill buildings are inserted into lots surrounded by single-family houses or small multi-family buildings or are located on a parcel within a higher density zone that is immediately adjacent to a lower density zone. As a result, people living in such buildings are negatively affected by new ones, see the quality of their lives diminished.

The compatibility of new buildings inserted into existing contexts can be ensured by fitting their scale and mass to that of their neighboring existing buildings. This process of transforming existing settings has been the key to forming Pasadena's exemplary building fabric over the decades.

(Left)  This mixed-use building overwhelms the neighboring house by not setting back its third floor and by cantilevering over the entry to its garage.

(Right) A mixed-use building steps down to the scale of the adjacent single-family house.



We believe the changes we request the Concept Design, are a benefit to the Applicant and the community, and attainable with modest time and effort. Therefore, they should be further considered by both the Design Commission and building developer with the goal of designing a far more suitable building for the neighborhood while avoiding the objectionable “Big Box” building, fully built-out to the lot lines that is *unquestionably out of character* as it is presently designed.

Changes We are Seeking — Appellant and Local Residents

The requested changes are needed for compliance with City of Pasadena Goals, Plans and Guidelines as well as to address environmental concerns.

1. Adjustments to the building design to reduce the massive uniform appearance and be more consistent with the neighborhood context and Pasadena Design Guidelines. For another example, the Block Character described on page 25 of the Design Guidelines relates:

“The successful fit of a new project into an existing context depends on how it relates to neighboring buildings to its side and rear in terms of setbacks, height, massing, scale, arrangement of shared and private open space, and landscape. This is especially important for lots located along the boundary between higher-density and lower-density zones where taller, larger buildings that are insensitively designed could pose a visual nuisance to existing, smaller scale buildings. For zones that are in transition from less intense to more intense uses, the issue of compatibility is particularly important. New higher-density projects need to respond to lower-density, existing buildings through compatible massing and thoughtfully designed side yard elevations.”

The project as presented needs to be more sensitive to the neighboring buildings, including space to allow both privacy and light to the adjacent properties and to reduce the perceived scale of the building. Many other examples of good design are provided in the Design Guidelines.

Response 2. All other multi-family building facades on this block of Oak Knoll are not broken up and present a wide, solid and massive appearance to the street. 500 S Oak Knoll, the Parkwood, for example, is around 200’ wide and solid in appearance. The massing of our building meets zoning code section 17.22.070.E.1 where no façade section is greater than 60’ in length. Our building façade is broken into 22’-6”, 26’-3” and 27’-3” sections, with a 15’-4” opening in the middle. Thus, any comment about the massiveness of our proposed building for this neighborhood is without context.

The other multi-family buildings on this block are built close to the side property lines of their respective parcels. Our proposed project meets or exceeds the setbacks required for RM48 on all sides. The required side setback is 5’ for the first 40’ and none thereafter (see table 2.4 of 17.22.060 of the zoning code). We have a 15’ setback for the entire length of the southern neighbor’s property and a range of 5’ to 7’-3” for the remainder of the south and north sides. Our front setback is the average of the block face, as required. We also meet all of the building separation requirements for major windows and minor windows.

The City of Gardens Ordinance has been cited by the Applicant as a mandatory reason for design of the long narrow courtyard in the center of the U-shaped building. This causes the building to be set back only 5 ft from the property lines on the north, west and partial south sides. However,

Request for Appeal - 511 Oak Knoll Avenue,

City of Gardens (RM District Gardens requirements) allows for alternatives with approval. Gardens on the sides of the building - rather than only in the center, would allow a smaller building footprint and allow more sunlight, landscaping and privacy for the adjacent properties — and the building residents. Gardens can still be readily seen from the street with good design.

Response 3. The zoning ordinance for RM48 section 17.22.080.A.4 requires that “the Main Garden be bounded on 75% of its perimeter by building walls, architectural elements or landscaping”. A central courtyard is the way to comply with this code in the vast majority of RM48 projects in Pasadena. To create a Garden outside of the building footprint would result in too small a courtyard to meet code as well as reducing unit to unit privacy within the courtyard. The Main Garden dimensions would also be too small to meet code. Creating a Main Garden next to the appellant’s property creates challenges as architectural or landscape elements would not be possible without affecting the tree roots of their protected tree.

There are better and less expensive solutions to the transformer substation noise than surrounding the entire building with enclosed exterior corridors. As the Concept Design stands, the courtyard garden can only be seen from the sidewalk/street from a very limited area.

Response 4. Our main garden is visible from the public way per code section 17.22.080.A.5, as was deemed compliant by zoning staff. The opening viewing into the main and ancillary gardens is 15’-4” wide.

2. Provide *specific* mitigations for the environmental concerns related by the public comment. While City staff has given us some assurance that our collective concerns will be addressed, why not put it in the Conditions of Approval? In particular, since to date these have been overlooked in both the Preliminary and Concept Design submissions, please consider the following.

- Excessive light from the enclosed exterior corridors (if those corridors should remain in the design).

Response 5. The owner is willing to study the possibility of using low level “runway” lights as long as it meets minimum foot candles for the building department. Another solution is to use motion sensor activated corridor lighting in the evening after a certain hour. The fire department will require only emergency lighting tied to the fire alarm system. If we were to have corridors on the interior of the courtyard, then all of the project’s units would face outward and look into the adjacent properties, which would then raise their privacy concerns. We strongly believe that our concept of exterior enclosed corridors is a good solution for mitigating the noise from the adjacent electrical substation while also protecting the privacy of the neighbors.

- Nighttime noise from 46 air conditioning units operating simultaneously.

Response 60. All of the multi-family buildings in this block of Oak Knoll Avenue also have multiple AC units on their roofs. This is a normal approach to AC units for multi-family projects and sound baffles can be installed with mechanical screens to mitigate concerns.

O Potential additional noise from 4 story vertical walls against the substafion reflecting noise to adjacent properties.

Response 7. Please see response letter from acoustical engineer.

O Parking plans — The Conditions of Approval say there will be no nighttime parking for new residents — however, parking at night is not currently restricted on S. Oak Knoll Avenue.

o Traffic studies. The current reports do not adequately reflect the new McKinley School population — at least 8 new classrooms have been added and other facilities. Estimates are that there are 200 to 300 additional students, staff and teachers. They require transportation to the school and parking; most twice per day.

Response 8. This is an existing condition which should be dealt with by public works and PUSD.

3. Provide extensive tree protection plan for the Canyon Live Oak Tree designated OS1 on the drawings — including protection of canopy branches during construction and final landscaping and water. As shown in the concept plan, part of the area under OS1 would be use for “pet relief”, meaning it would be washed down regularly. This water would be detrimental to OS1.
4. Provide a fire protection plan to demonstrate access to the new building and adjacent properties given the minimal S-foot set-back from property lines, 4 stories and interior corridors.

Our comments need to be addressed. The community has been passionately commenting on this proposed development for over 12 months since the Preliminary Design package was provided to the public expressly for this purpose. With a single exception (small change in foundation layout for OS1 tree roots that is still inadequate), and to extent that we are aware of, none of the submitted verbal and written comments have been addressed by the City — either in writing or within design changes. Meanwhile, the proposed development presents numerous significant impacts to the S. Oak Knoll Avenue neighborhood. Please refer to the letter references enclosed in Appendix D — *Comment Letters and Communications - Preliminary and Concept Designs*.

Pasadena Design Commission Staff Report Conclusions

The Planning Department's Staff Report is a comprehensive and report based on the Applicant's Concept Design and includes a number of the supporting reports prepared by or for the City. It also included a few (but not all) of the letters and communications submitted by local and concerned residents. Please reference Appendix D for a summary of known letters and communications from the Appellant and local residents expressing concern over both the Preliminary Design (September 2024) and Concept Design (October 2025).

We are deeply concerned that the Staff Report (28 October 2025) and Notice of Decision Letter concluded that the Findings for Concept Design Approval were:

“The Project... will comply with the purposes of design review the design-related goals and policies

Request for Appeal - 511 Oak Knoll Avenue,

in the Land Use Element of the General Plan and the design-related goals and policies in the Central District Specific Plan, and the Design Guidelines for Neighborhood Commercial and Multi-Family Residential District..."

and

"Found that approval of the project will not result in any significant effects relate to traffic, noise, air quality, water quality, or cultural resources."

Our review of the design and environmental analysis has revealed many impacts and conflicts with the City's goals of allowing denser development within transitional areas, but in a form sensitive and compatible to neighbors. Additionally, we have found errors, incomplete studies, and inconsistencies in the Concept Design Review package that should have been corrected (or clarified) by the Applicant well in advance of the Public Hearing, as well as before any "go", or "no go" or "hold for clarification" decision by the Commission at the Hearing. And, at this juncture, we find ourselves faced with making this formal Appeal of the Concept Design Decision. This should have been substantially avoidable with responses to neighborhood concerns and a process seeking continuous input, rather than a hearing with 3 days to review documents and no opportunity for an informational dialogue with the Commissioners.

Design Commission's Vote on the Concept Design

We note that two of the six Design Commission Members present at the Public Hearing voted not to *accept* (or proceed) with the Concept Design in its current form (notwithstanding the *Recommended Conditions for Approval* drafted by the Staff). In the dissenting Members' view, significant design adjustments were needed to achieve their approval at the Concept Design stage — and comply with the City's published Design Guidelines. These same Members continuously pressed (in the Hearing) for more definition and adjusted *exterior* facades, finishes and most importantly, the issues, waste and inefficiency resulting from the interior garden in the rectangular footprint of the proposed building. Other issues were discussed between the Members and the Applicant are a matter of public record in the recording from the Hearing. This dissent from two Commissioners supports our Appeal.

Conditions of Approval of the Applicant's Concept Design

As stated above, several of the Members of the Design Commission were truly concerned about the design, mass of the building, perimeter set-backs, enclosed exterior corridors and overall inappropriateness to the neighborhood. We note that even though these and many other issues, concerns and suggestions were openly discussed between the Commission Members and the Applicant, none were recorded into "adjusted" Conditions of Approval subsequent to the Hearing for the Concept Design. To comply with design guidelines a number of good solutions were proposed, but none pursued:

- Massing adjustments
- « Building set-backs

7

- Changes in brick facades

- Mansard roof adjustments
- Landscaping plan
- Interior garden re-arrangements to allow more green space and smaller building scale

Our more detailed comments on issues related to the Conditions of Approval are included in Appendix C and should be read in conjunction with all other focused Appendices.

Potential Path Forward

This building is 4 stories tall and fully extends to the property lines, presents a massive box in an otherwise Pasadena zoning compliant neighborhood. We realize that the State of California now allows for a "density bonus", but there are conflicts and competing goals such as Pasadena's Design Guidelines, City of Gardens and the State's "Density Bonus." This has resulted in a Concept Design that will be detrimental to our neighborhood and the City. The impact is lose-lose for all. The neighborhood, the building occupants and the City. The building with a 4 story deep narrow interior courtyard clearly "turns it back" on its neighbors surrounding and nearby properties to protect itself from the adjacent substation noise (only impacGng about a 1/6 of the property perimeter). The 4-story height means that virtually no direct sunlight reaches much of the interior courtyard. Additionally, the minimal lot line clearances along with the building height, prevent natural light and green space to the neighboring properties.

An obvious alternative would be to change or eliminate the interior courtyard as designed (and discussed at the Public Hearing on 28 Oct 2025) and instead, allow more space for elegant garden landscaping on the exterior of the building. This would allow more light to the proposed building AND adjacent buildings, as well as additional privacy and green space. This would also reduce the non-guideline compliant building's footprint and address privacy concerns with additional building spacing.

Closing Remarks

We understand the City and State's need for more housing, and do not object to the density. However, the project design as currently represented in the Applicant's Concept Design could be vastly improved for all — the residents of the proposed development, the neighbors and the City. Please do not allow this experiment with housing density, noise mitigation, and completely secluded interior gardens for the new occupants (only) to proceed without really understanding what the lasting impacts will be to all. Is this the new standard that Pasadena can accept? It certainly does not comply with existing guidelines. A bit more study is truly warranted here — a few more months of design work will be minor compared to lifetimes of living with the current design. As stated in the City's Design Guidelines:

“The City's Comprehensive General Plan promotes architectural and design excellence in buildings, landscape, open space, and urban design. It also stipulates that preservation of Pasadena's character and scale, including its traditional urban design form, shall be given the highest priority in consideration of future development. (P.1)

“The long-term character and vitality of Pasadena's neighborhoods, districts, and corridors are more important than any one architectural project. Yet, because the development process is increments/, the insertion of an infill project into an existing context can contribute either to a long-term process of harmonious city building or its slow unraveling.” (P. 26 Section V, Block Character)

This project will surely start a slow unraveling of our block — if not a fast raveling. There are solutions, and in our collective view at this Concept Design stage, it is not too late to set a good and creative example for better and far more efficient multi-family building design. This building, with the “moat inspired” fortress like design, protects itself to the detriment of the neighbors and the Concept Design is contrary to the goals and spirit of the Pasadena Design Guidelines.

Response 9. This is a project on a long vacant lot and the neighbors have grown used the openness at this part of the street. However, it is private property with rights of development, as long as it meets the City's zoning and building codes. Many of the issues on this street are pre-existing and relate to traffic generated by the school on this block. We believe that this project will be a good addition to the neighborhood and is an improvement to the many existing buildings that were built before the zoning requirements of the recent two decades. This project adds much needed market rate as well as affordable housing to the City. The approval by the Design Commission should be upheld.

Thank you for your attention to this letter, Appendices and *Request for Appeal* of the Design Commission Decision to proceed with the Concept Design of the proposed multi-family development at 511 S. Oak Knoll Avenue. We and many members of the neighborhood would be pleased to discuss further how we can improve this project to the benefit of all.

Sincerely,



Brian Fulcher and Amanda Elioff

Pasadena, CA 91101

cc: Jason Lyons, Pasadena District 7 Representative

November 24, 2025

Mr. Brian Taylor
Taylor & Clark
1986 S Coast Hwy #3043
Laguna Beach, CA 92651

**Subject: 510 S Oak Knoll Ave – Noise Evaluation Survey, Review and Memo for Substation
Noise – City of Pasadena, CA
Response to Comments #1**

Dear Mr. Taylor:

MD Acoustics, LLC (MD) has received comments from Brian Fulcher and Amanda Elioff dated November 7, 2025. MD has provided these responses to the comments as outlined below.

Responses to Comments from Brian Fulcher and Amanda Elioff:

Appendix J – Building Reflective Noise Issues (pages 34-36)

Comment 1. We are concerned that the proposed 4 stories of vertical building walls will reflect and amplify noise originating from the PWP substation to the adjacent properties surrounding the existing substation. After reading the latest report (MD Acoustics, LLC - listed below) and some further discussions with others with expertise in this field, we request the City require the following

- *An additional and more comprehensive acoustical analyses by an experienced noise and vibration specialist to study the impact of the building height next to the substation*
- *Building exterior surfacing materials (i.e. noise reflectivity and attenuation characteristics)*

MD Response: MD's expertise in the field of acoustics and vibration has a combined 249 years of experience including 129 years of academic experience. Our field, lab and environmental experience includes the evaluation of hundreds of success projects where we evaluate the noise associated with electrical and mechanical equipment. This evaluation was conducted under a very experienced team of acousticians (see Appendix A for resumes).

Both the building height and reflectivity of the building surfaces were accounted for in the SoundPlan 3D acoustical model. The model provides a conservative (worst-case scenario) estimate of the reflected noise; MD set the building material

reflection coefficient, α , to 0.794 which is an industry standard value for modeling hard (fully) reflective surfaces.

Comment 2. *The report should study the impacts on existing residents for daytime and nighttime, and weekends considering current ambient conditions (day and night), and what mitigations are needed to minimize and/or eliminate these impacts. While the MD Acoustics report appears to provide a noise and vibration study related to reflection of substation noise, it falls short on many other critical requirements and measurements to assess contributing noise impacts on neighboring properties and residents directly resulting from the proposed building development.*

MD Response: The noise memo our firm completed does fully assess the acoustical impact of the power substation noise reflections caused by the proposed 4-story building (building height set to 40 feet in the SoundPlan model); the change in noise level will be imperceptible. Table 1 below shows the apparent changes in loudness associated with corresponding changes in decibel level. Noise level changes for the proposed condition will be, at most, one (1) decibel. The human ear is incapable of discerning changes in sound pressure level that are at most 1 decibel. Therefore, there will be no acoustical impact resulting from building reflections. No further analysis is required.

Table 1: Change in Noise Level Characteristics¹

Changes in Intensity Level, dBA	Changes in Apparent Loudness
1	Not perceptible
3	Just perceptible
5	Clearly noticeable
10	Twice (or half) as loud

1. https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environMent/noise/regulations_and_guidance/polguide/polguide02.cfm

Comment 3. *Moreover, the conclusions of the MD Acoustics report state that presence of the proposed 4-story building located basically on the property line between the proposed building development and the PWP transformer yard will have no net effect on the noise level measured at surrounding buildings. This is very surprising - especially in light of the detailed graphic elements (i.e. yellow and light green shaded noise and vibration distribution levels) included in the report (see next page) that illustrate denser and redistributed noise levels (generally southward) from the proposed 4-story building development.*

MD Response: MD placed the receptors at the locations that showed the largest change in level near the adjacent property to the east of the power substation. Figure 1 shows the existing condition and Figure 2 shows the proposed project condition with

eight (8) additional receptors placed in the area of concern to the south of the power substation. As shown in the figures below, there will be no discernible change in noise level as the maximum change in any of the ten (10) receptors will be 1 decibel.

Figure 1: Existing Condition Addendum Noise Contour

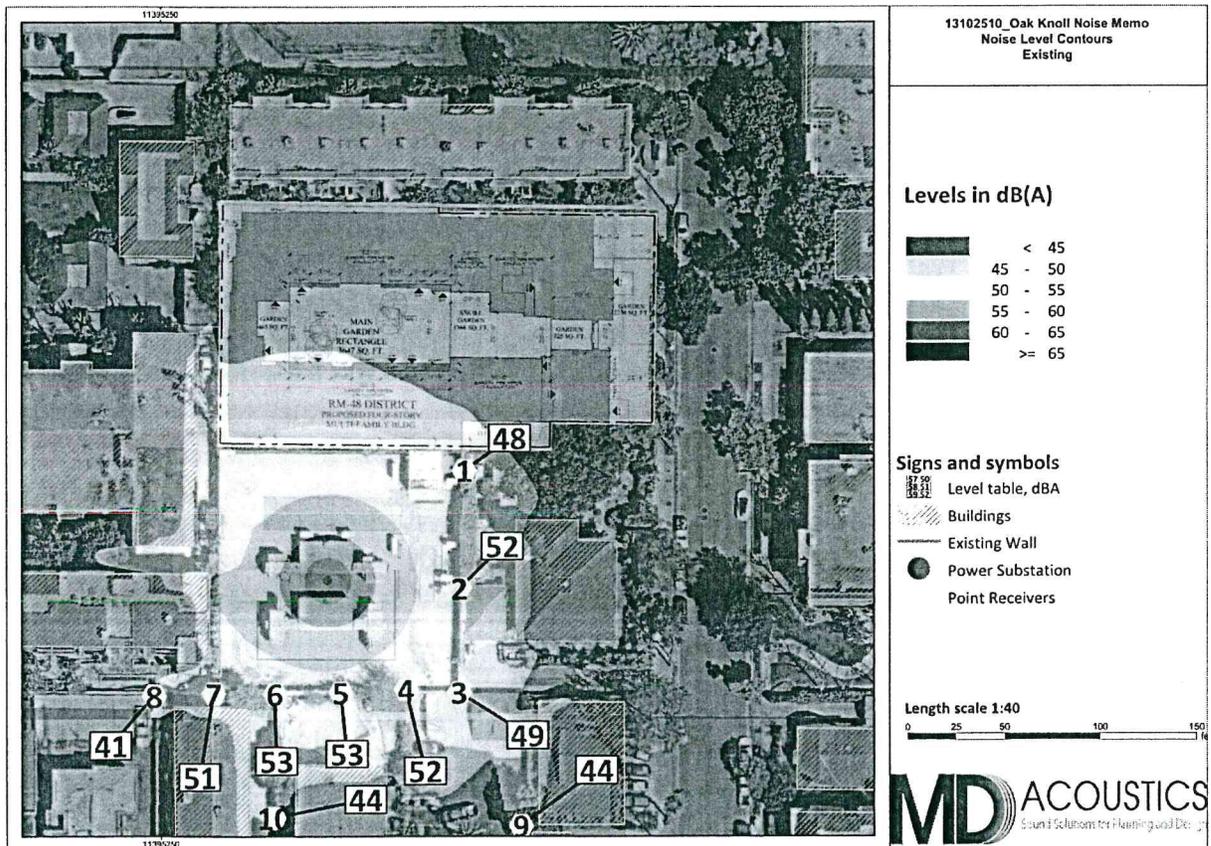
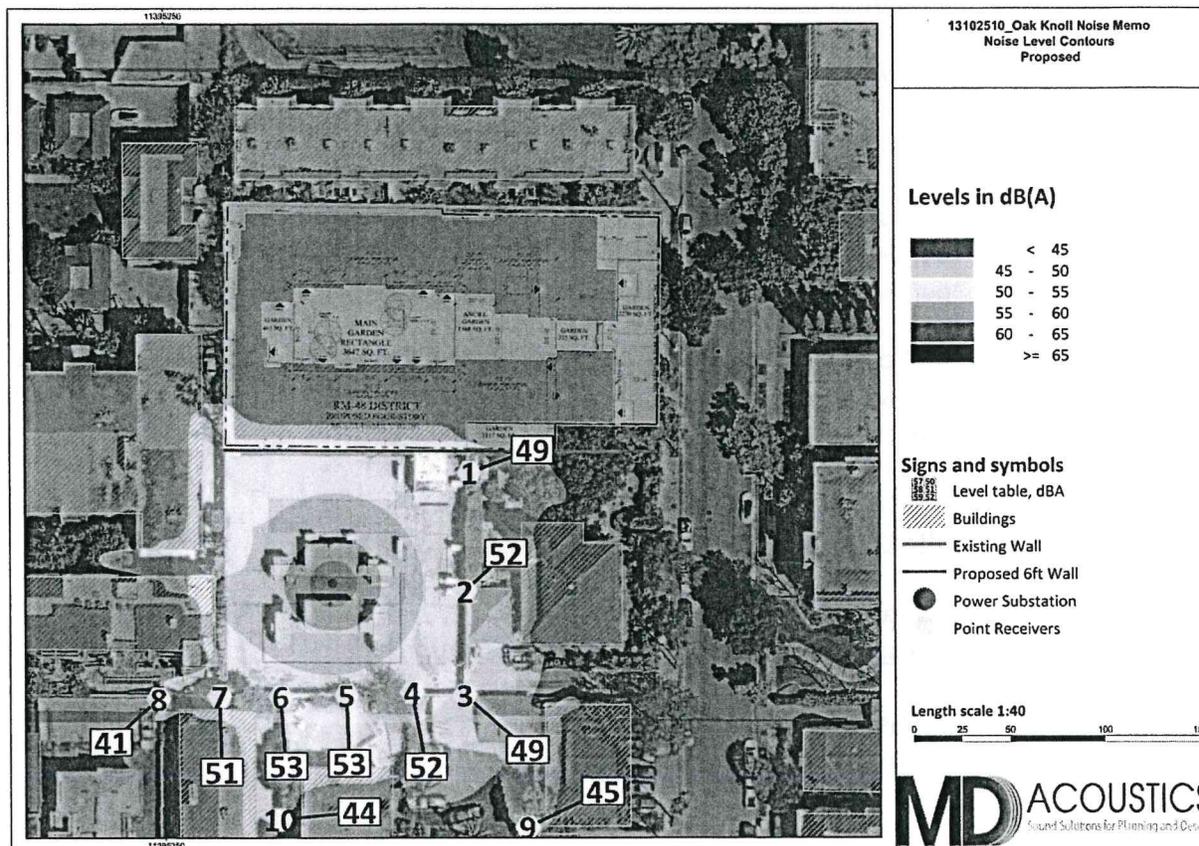


Figure 2: Proposed Condition Addendum Noise Contour



Comment 4 *Since the City's Noise Report is considered a formal engineering work product, it needs to be stamped by a California registered Professional Engineer with experience and credentials for the work described. This is customary to assert authentication and reliance. Specialist consultants are fully aware of this requirement and the City should directly insist on it to be assured of professional Standard of Care, coverage and reliability.*

MD Response: There is no official acoustical engineering professional engineering stamp in the state of California or in any state in the United States. Any professional engineer that stamps a noise study using a PE stamp would fall outside their expertise purview and would go against the ethics of the engineering society that they belong to (e.g. civil, structural, mechanical and electrical).

It should be noted however the MD Acoustics is part of multiple professional acoustical associations and part of boards within the acoustical societies including the following:

National Council of Acoustical Consultants
<https://ncac.com/resources-directory/>

Institute of Noise Control Engineers
<https://www.inceusa.org/board-certification/about/>

Acoustical Society of America
<https://acousticalsociety.org/>

This acoustical analysis provided by our team was reviewed and approved by members of the Institute of Noise Control Engineering (INCE) as well as a board-certified acoustical consultant. The INCE board certification process has strict requirements which include passing an eight hour exam, similar to a PE Exam.

Please do not hesitate to call our office at 805-426-4477 with any questions or comments.

Sincerely,
MD Acoustics, LLC



Samuel Hord, INCE-USA, Bd. Cert
Sr. Acoustical Consultant



Claire Pincock, INCE-USA
Sr. Acoustical Consultant



Joel Demir, INCE-USA
Acoustical Consultant

Appendix A
Resumes



Joel Demir

Acoustical Consultant



Joel Demir studied mechanical engineering and materials engineering as an undergraduate at Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, and graduated in 2007 with a B.A. in music. His broad spectrum of work experience and interests have given him a well-rounded perspective into the world of acoustics. He has worked as an analyst, written, recorded, and produced music, built and managed a home studio, lead and directed bands, and consulted for room acoustics and noise mitigation. Prior to MD, Joel worked as an independent contractor offering acoustical consulting, product design, and acoustical installation services.

In 2023, Joel began studying acoustics at Penn State University where he is pursuing his M.Eng. degree.

Education

Penn State Acoustics M.Eng. Program (ongoing)
Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo
B.A., Music, 2007

Certifications

Engineer-in-Training
Arizona State Board of Technical Registration

Affiliations

- Institute of Noise Control Engineers (INCE), Associate Member
- Acoustical Society of America (ASA), Associate Member

Representative Project Experience

Architectural Acoustics Assessment/Design

- Direct Relief Media Room, Santa Barbara, CA
- Franciscan Renewal Center Sanctuary, Scottsdale, AZ
- Cumulus Restaurant, Culver City, CA
- Gillette Stadium, Foxborough, MA

Representative Project Experience - continued

Noise Assessment

- Super Star Carwash Express Noise Study and Abatement, Murrieta, CA
- Valley Crescent School Noise Study, Clovis, CA
- GDC Array Manufacturing Facility, Albuquerque, NM
- Blackhawk KB Homes, Tucson, AZ
- Tia/BodyRok Demising Wall, Santa Monica, CA
- Tia West Hollywood Noise Isolation and Analysis, West Hollywood, CA
- Urban Air Adventure Park Noise Isolation Analysis, Murrieta, CA
- Sagecrest Multifamily Development, Riverside, CA
- Hyatt Place Hyatt House Hotel Noise Isolation Review and Recommendations, Ontario, CA
- Home Run Dugout, Scottsdale, AZ
- Cumulus Restaurant, Culver City, CA
- 1011 & 1015 5th Avenue, Condo Conversion Interior Noise Review and Design, Venice, CA
- Gilroy Self Storage Noise Review Letter, Gilroy, CA
- Village III Pickleball Noise Assessment, Scottsdale, AZ
- YCH Masterplan Noise Study, Woodland, CA
- Eureka Scattered Site HUD Noise Study, Eureka, CA
- Monarch Gym Noise Isolation Review, West Hollywood, CA
- Flames Gymnastics Noise Isolation Analysis and Recommendations, Peoria, AZ
- Onsemi Compressor Noise Isolation, Scottsdale, AZ
- NOAA Manchester Research Station Noise and Vibration Review, Port Orchard, WA

Construction Noise and Vibration

- Mesa N.E. Public Safety Vibration Report, Mesa, AZ
- Noise Measurement Field Work
- ATT2730 Wildflower Dr. Telecom Noise Study, Antioch, CA
- ATT 1764 Hillsdale Telecom Noise Study, San Jose, CA
- ATT 3332 Adeline St. Telecom Noise Study, Berkeley, CA
- Quick Quack AeroDry Tunnel Blower Noise Study, Sacramento, CA
- 8094 Southworth rd. Telecom Noise Study, Valley Springs, CA
- Eureka Scattered Site HUD Noise Study, Eureka, CA
- GDC Array Manufacturing Facility, Albuquerque, NM
- Gilroy Self Storage Noise Review Letter, Gilroy, CA

Acoustical Modeling

- Dish Wireless NJJER0104A Noise Review Letter, Ardsley, NY
- AT&T 10576767 Kendall-Washington DNR Noise Review Letter, Deming, WA
- T-Mobile BA01341A Crown Burton Valley, Lafayette, CA

RT-60

- Direct Relief Media Room, Santa Barbara, CA
- Cumulus Restaurant, Culver City, CA
- Tohono O'odham Legislative Building RT60 Calculations, City of Sells, AZ
- Franciscan Renewal Center Sanctuary, Scottsdale, AZ
- Gillette Stadium, Foxborough, MA

[Go Back to Meet the Team](#) ↑



Claire Pincock

Sr. Acoustic Consultant



Claire Pincock graduated from Brigham Young University in the top 5% of her graduating class with a Bachelor of Science degree in Applied Physics with an emphasis in acoustics and a minor in Mathematics. Before joining MD Acoustics, she was a research assistant at BYU. Her research was focused on speech acoustics, specifically on how speech radiates from the mouth. <https://www.physics.byu.edu/thesis/archive/2017>

In 2017, Claire presented her research with Dr. Timothy Leishman on speech directivity at the Acoustical Society of America, spring Boston conference where she placed 2nd in the student competition on speech acoustics. <http://asa.scitation.org/doi/abs/10.1121/1.4987652>

This research is also presented in the following paper published in the Journal of the Acoustical Society of America in 2021: <https://asa.scitation.org/doi/10.1121/10.0003363>

Education

Brigham Young University
B.S., Applied Physics (Acoustics), 2017
Magna Cum Laude

The Pennsylvania State University
2022-Ongoing

Affiliations & Awards

Member, INCE-USA
Member, Acoustical Society of America

Representative Project Experience

Architectural Acoustics Assessment

- Vista Del Mar Residential Development, Dana Point, CA
- Hampton Inn, Santa Ana, CA
- 745 N. Croft Avenue Multi-Family Residential Development, Los Angeles, CA
- 700 N. Virgil Multi-Family Residential Development, Los Angeles, CA
- Lakeview Senior Living, Yorba Linda, CA
- Foursquare, Redondo Beach, CA
- Harbor View Villas – Rebuild Development, Ventura, CA
- Miramar Super Star Car Wash, San Diego, CA
- Lakeside Special Care, Lakeside, CA
- 1835 Oddie Blvd Nursing Home, Sparks, NV
- HUD NEPA Project Legacy, Riverside, CA
- Uppercut Studio, Culver City, CA
- Long Court Apartments, Thousand Oaks, CA
- The Valley Club, Hailey, ID
- The Foundry, Idaho Falls, ID
- Medical Office Building, Ammon, ID

Representative Project Experience - continued

Noise Assessment

- Vineland Gas Station and Car Wash, Los Angeles, CA
- Lakeview Terrace Gas Station & Car Wash, Los Angeles, CA
- Van Buren Blvd Express Car Wash, Riverside, CA
- Broadway Gas Station and Car Wash, Los Angeles, CA
- Clinton Keith Service Station and Car Wash, Murrieta, CA
- Old Middlefield Car Wash, Mountain View, CA
- Riverside Car Wash and Retail, Jurupa Valley, CA
- Estrella Commons Residential Development, Goodyear, AZ
- Blackstone & McKinley Multi-Family Development, Fresno, CA
- Haven at 26th Mixed Residences, Rancho Cucamonga, CA
- Berylwood Park Skatepark, Simi Valley, CA
- Marshalls – Del Amo Plaza, Torrance, CA
- Desert Land Ventures, Desert Hot Springs, CA
- Pico Blvd Multi-Family Development Cat32, Los Angeles, CA
- Cyrus One Trane Chillers, Chandler, AZ
- Baypoint Preparatory Academy, San Jacinto, CA
- Eagle Shooting Sports Park, Eagle, ID
- Amani Apartments, Los Angeles, CA
- Santa Rosa Apartments, Santa Rosa, CA
- Kawana Springs Apartments, Santa Rosa, CA
- Jillson and Harbor Residential Developments, Commerce, CA
- Adams Boulevard Car Wash and Service Station, Los Angeles, CA
- Southeast Regional Soccer Park, Fresno, CA
- Pico and Fox Hill Restaurant, Los Angeles, CA
- Market Sciortino Rance Center Development, Brentwood, CA
- Hyssop Drive Warehouse, Rancho Cucamonga, CA
- Pavilion Plaza West, Garden Grove, CA
- Merced Snelling Road, Snelling, CA
- Ammon Multifamily Development, Ammon, ID
- Lab 5 Soccer Fields, Gardena, CA

- MSG Entertainment Studios, Burbank, CA
- Quick Quack Car Wash – over 50 locations in CA, NV, AZ, UT, and TX
- Modwash Car Wash – 7 locations in PA, SC, and NJ
- Super Star Car Wash – over 30 locations in AZ, CO, CA, and TX
- Car Wash Pro Designers – 6 locations in TX and IL

Vibration Assessment

- Canyon Creek Blasting, San Diego, CA
- Warner Ave Vault Resonance, Huntington Beach, CA
- Ellis Commons Senior Housing Blasting, Perris, CA
- Meadowbrook Rail Vibration, Oconto Falls, WI
- Salem Cross Rail Vibration, Lansing, IL
- W Whitner Rail Vibration, Anderson, SC
- 300 South Washington St Rail Vibration, Seattle, WA
- Gateway Commons Apartments Rail Vibration, Hillsboro, OR

Construction Noise and Vibration

- Mae Boyar Park Community Building, Oak Park, CA
- Broadway Gas Station and Car Wash, Los Angeles, CA
- Clinton Keith Service Station and Car Wash, Murrieta, CA
- Equestrian Trails Pipeline, Phoenix, AZ

Noise Reviews/Updates

- Mt. San Antonio College Facilities and Projects Noise Review, Walnut, CA
- French Valley Airport Development, Riverside Co., CA
- Cameron Ave Surf Thru Express Car Wash Noise Compliance, Visalia, CA
- Modwash Car Wash, Pinellas Park, FL
- Starbucks Hillcrest & US 59, Houston, TX

Court Cases

- Sanctuary at Desert Ridge, Scottsdale, AZ
- Mirabella ASU, Tempe, AZ
- Roper Concrete Batch, Alto, NM

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Representative Project Experience - continued

Municipal Code/General Plan

- Flagstaff Parks Noise Ordinance, Flagstaff, AZ
- Flagstaff Noise Ordinance, Flagstaff, AZ
- Idaho Falls Noise Ordinance, Idaho Falls, ID
- Fresno West General Plan Update EIR, Fresno, CA
- Sierra Madre Housing Update EIR, Sierra Madre, CA
- San Jacinto General Plan Update EIR, San Jacinto, CA
- Redwood City Housing Updated EIR, Redwood City, CA
- Gardena Housing Element Update, Gardena, CA
- Paradise Ranch, Chino Hills, CA
- North Shepherd SOI Expansion, Clovis, CA
- Hawthorne General Plan and Specific Plan Update, Lawndale, CA
- Agoura Hills General Plan Update, Agoura Hills, CA
- Fontana SB2 General Plan Update, Fontana, CA

Facilities

- MD Acoustics anechoic chamber qualification
- Ft. Huachuca anechoic chamber qualification, AZ

RT-60

- FCG Conference Rooms and Training Room, Draper, UT
- Leuzinger High School Cafeteria, Lawndale, CA
- Museum of Idaho, Idaho Falls, ID

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Samuel Hord

Sr. Acoustic Consultant



Samuel Hord is an Arizona native with a knack for noise control.

While a student at Brigham Young University, he solved practical problems, including architectural modes, intelligibility metrics, jet noise analysis, traffic noise modeling, barrier insertion loss, and outdoor sound propagation. He investigated the reflection of sound off the ground as a research assistant for Kent Gee and Traci Neilsen. As a research assistant, he also helped develop an acoustical model for the sound field near a rocket engine, and he assisted in a full-scale shock wave experiment involving exploding balloons.

After graduating from BYU, Mr. Hord spent a summer in the Sound Research Group at Caterpillar, Inc. There he researched new acoustical technologies and their applications to Caterpillar machines, and he conducted experiments in the acoustical chambers at their Peoria, Illinois facility. His experience there included using industry standards to perform sound absorption, sound power, sound transmission loss, and insertion loss tests. The highlight of his experience there included assisting in the acoustical characterization a new motor grader cab.

Mr. Hord went to graduate school at The University of Texas at Austin. As a Longhorn, he spent countless hours in a cleanroom fabricating sensors for acoustic MEMS research under Neal Hall. He developed a fabrication process for three different sensors, including optical gratings, shear sensors, and CMUTs. For his master's thesis, he modeled, characterized, and tested electrical and acoustical properties of ultrasonic transducers built using the fabrication platform he developed. He completed his Master of Science in Mechanical Engineering in December 2017.

After completing his degree at The University of Texas, Mr. Hord enrolled in two more acoustics classes and taught two sections of an undergraduate physics class before returning home to Arizona. He continues to indulge his passion for teaching as an adjunct faculty at Mesa Community College.

Education

Brigham Young University
B.S., Applied Physics (Acoustics), 2014

The University of Texas at Austin
M.S. Mechanical Engineering (Acoustics), 2017

Affiliations & Awards

Institute of Noise Control Engineers (INCE)
Board-Cert.

Architectural Acoustics Assessment

- Midwestern University Necropsy Lab, Glendale, AZ
- Ottawa University Athletic Facility, Surprise, AZ
- 528 N Flores Multifamily Residential, West Hollywood, CA
- Private Gun Range, Gilbert, AZ
- Terravita Golf & Country Club, Scottsdale, AZ
- SGI Chandler Worship Facility, Chandler, AZ
- Residential Multifamily (63 Units), Montebello, CA
- Virgil Co-Living Mixed Use (Commercial + 30 Unit Residential), Los Angeles, CA

Representative Project Experience

Architectural Acoustics Assessment - continued

- Normandie Residence (88 Unit Residential), Los Angeles, CA
- Wilton Place (29 Unit Residential), Los Angeles CA
- 425 N Palm Multifamily, Beverly Hills, CA
- Public Safety Training Facility, Gilbert, AZ
- Town of Gilbert Dispatch Center, Gilbert, AZ
- Town of Gilbert Council Chambers, Gilbert, AZ
- JPMC Call Center, Tempe, AZ
- Americana at Brand, Glendale, CA
- Camelback Commerce Center, Phoenix, AZ
- Diablo Country Club, Diablo, CA
- Hotel Sul Fiume, San Antonio, TX
- Hotel ZinZanni, San Francisco, CA
- Westbrook Multifamily Development, Riverside, CA
- Pershing Drive Condominium Conversion, Los Angeles, CA
- Honor Health, Fountain Hills, AZ
- Clark Senior Living Facility, Beverly Hills, CA
- Legend Brands, Phoenix, AZ
- Knockout Fitness, Phoenix, AZ
- BoxHaus Fitness, Los Angeles, CA
- Rumble Fitness, Tempe, AZ
- Courtyard Marriott, Scottsdale, AZ
- Roc Nation, Los Angeles, CA
- UpperCut Edit, Culver City, CA
- UpperCut Edit, New York City, NY

Noise Assessment

- Fairfield Inn and Banquet Hall, Perris, CA
- Foghorn Noise Acoustic Evaluation and Noise Review, Oxnard, CA
- NXP Semiconductor Fabrication Noise Evaluation, Chandler, AZ
- City of Flagstaff Special Event Noise Study, Flagstaff, AZ
- McDowell Mountain Golf Club Outdoor Noise Study, Scottsdale, AZ
- Vi at Silverstone Noise Investigation, Scottsdale, AZ
- Soto Street Car Wash Noise Impact Study, Los Angeles, CA
- SuperStar Express Car Wash Noise Impact Study, Apache Junction, AZ
- Pickleball Expansion, Leisure World, Mesa, AZ
- Quick Quack Carwash, Corpus Christi, TX
- Habitat for Humanity, South Gate, CA
- Casa Blanca Subdivision Wall, Paradise Valley, AZ

- Modwash Carwash, Ross Township, PA
- Modwash Carwash, Windsor Township, PA
- Modwash Carwash, York Township, PA
- Modwash Carwash, Pike Road, AL
- Carwash Pro Designers Carwash, Mundelein, IL
- Carwash Pro Designers Carwash, Smyrna, TN
- Quick Quack Carwash, Flower Mound, TX
- Orange Tree Golf Resort, Scottsdale, AZ
- Scottsdale Plaza Resort, Paradise Valley, AZ
- Mountain Shadows Resort, Paradise Valley, AZ
- The Sanctuary Resort, Paradise Valley, AZ
- El Chorro Restaurant, Paradise Valley, AZ
- Andaz Resort, Paradise Valley, AZ
- Sedona Oak Creek Resort, Sedona, AZ
- Wildomar Commerce Center, Wildomar, CA

Telecommunications

- AT&T Cell Phone Tower Noise Evaluation, La Grande, CA

Construction Noise and Vibration

- NXP Semiconductor Vibration Monitoring, Chandler, AZ
- Canopy by Hilton Vibration Monitoring, Scottsdale, AZ

Vibration Assessment

- Atomic Force Microscope Vibration Survey, AMAT ASU, AZ
- Semiconductor Vibration Surveys, NXP, AZ
- Semiconductor Vibration Isolation, NXP, AZ

Product Development

- Medical Device, Flex, Irving, TX
- International Drying Corporation, Chicago, IL
- Attic Vents, Western Vent, Phoenix, AZ
- BolaWrap, Tempe, AZ

Court Cases

- Shady Park, Tempe, AZ
- Public Shooting Sports Park, Eagle, ID
- Promontory Freeway Noise, Phoenix, AZ
- Roper Construction Litigation, Santa Fe, NM
- Optima Camelview, Scottsdale, AZ

Municipal Code

- Flagstaff Noise Ordinance, Flagstaff, AZ

Facilities

- MD Acoustics, LLC Anechoic Chamber Qualification, AZ
- Ft. Huachuca anechoic chamber qualification, AZ

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McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

From: Chris Saylor
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2026 3:04 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Cc: 511.not.okay@gmail.com
Subject: 511 S. Oak Knoll Ave. Design Commission Appeal, March 23, 2026
Attachments: chrisappeal 2 AE.docx

Some people who received this message don't often get email from c

[arn why this is important](#)

[1] **CAUTION:** This email was delivered from the Internet. Do not click links or open attachments unless you **know** the content is safe. Report phish using the Phish Alert Button. For more information about the Phish Alert Button view article "KB0011474" on the DoIT portal.

Please see attached letter regarding this for the upcoming City Council meeting on 3/23/2026.

I am writing in support of appellants Fulcher and Eloff regarding the proposed development at 511 S. Oak Knoll Ave. It is my feeling that the process has been overly accommodating to the developer, at the expense of the neighborhood. Community comments have not met with any response from the architect, and the process has resulted in a project that is overly burdensome to the neighborhood, and less than ideal for future residents there. I feel this will greatly diminish our street, and set a bad precedent for future developments throughout Pasadena. We want the Design Commission to feel empowered to make demands and requests of developers, and for developers across the city to understand that they need to be more sensitive to and cooperative with existing neighborhoods.

At the Preliminary consultation of the Design Commission, staff stated that the density bonus would not be reviewed in detail until the following Concept Design Review. Prior to that first meeting of 9/24/24, public comments were submitted via email from multiple community members, but were not highlighted by staff. Many issues seemed to be deferred to the later meeting. Staff noted at this preliminary meeting that the density bonus would not be addressed until "we get to that final approval stage." Discussion of how to address issues of "massing" when the "density" was not at issue seemed confusing to a lay person. The neighborhood felt there would be additional opportunities to address our concerns. Commissioner Farres concluded in that first meeting: "I think there's a lot of work to be done" and asked the architect to "guide the developer into how to put it (the project) in its context." Appellants and neighbors continued to voice our concerns about the project over the months that followed, but felt there was little response, and the final result seemed to almost universally ignore those concerns.

By the time of the next meeting, 13 months later, criticisms of the design seemed to be coming too late in the process. At the 10/28/25 meeting, proposals that would have greatly mitigated the negative impact on the community were deemed too "onerous," "unfair to the applicant," and generally just too late in the process to require significant changes. Applicants were asked if they could place some trees on the perimeter to enhance privacy and beauty for the neighbors, but the minimal setback made any landscaping impossible. The architect stated there was nowhere to put additional landscaping on the ground floor. The architect was asked to consider a "single double loaded corridor," (essentially what appellants are requesting), a "denser project with the gardens on the outside," but the response was the owner is on a very tight timeline. Commissioners seemed quite displeased with the project, but any attempts to make adjustments seemed too much to require of the developer. As community members, we were stunned. At the first meeting, we could not voice concerns about density and massing, and at the second it was too late and too onerous to request any further changes. The design changed very little between the two meetings.

At the Concept Design Review, as the decision approached, the Chair asked for a motion. Long pause. Finally, Commissioner Tyler said, "I guess I can make a motion to approve, reluctantly and very sympathetically to the neighbors' concerns, but I don't know that we have any basis to not put it forth as at least a recommendation." Hardly a ringing endorsement of a massive project that has the potential to kill a protected tree and devastate the character of a neighborhood. The vote was 4-2, with both the chair and vice

chair voting no. This commission is a 9-member commission, and though 6 is a quorum, we would be eager to know how the three missing commissioners would have voted. I feel the commission should have felt empowered to send the architect back to the drawing board with the multiple requests made by commissioners and by community members. We feel that approval of this project is **unfair** and **onerous** to the community.

From a neighborhood perspective, this process has created a disastrous project. It seems to be a monstrous panopticon for the future residents who will be looking into each other's units, and with most units having no access to direct sunlight. In winter it will be brutally dark in the courtyard and southern units. For the neighbors to the north and south, the presence of walls with lighted windows a mere 5 feet from the property line will make it seem like a 24/7 office building. Commissioners begged the applicants to make changes that would soften the massing, provide greenery from the outside, and gently step up the project in line with the neighborhood, with a 5 story portion in the back. Appellants have spent hours on alternative models and ideas, and have tried to have their ideas incorporated by the developer. It is my understanding that the developer refused to make any changes, thus necessitating this decision by the City Council.

The property came with a number of constraints. It is long and skinny, with little road frontage. The protected oak tree sits a mere 5 feet from the property line to the south. Protection of that tree has been kicked to the final approval meeting, at which point we are afraid they will say, as in this instance, that it is too late in the process and too onerous to the builders to make any adjustments. The architectural images provided to the Commission inaccurately represented the location of the tree (placing it further south in the appellant's yard), thereby minimizing the impact to the tree, and not giving the commissioners the ability to make an informed determination. This tree is a massive **PROTECTED** oak on **S OAK** Knoll Avenue, and its health and continued survival need to be ensured by the City. The canopy and root ball will be impacted by needing to be trimmed, and construction equipment is likely to compact the soil. Loss of this tree would be devastating to the residents of this entire portion of the street. We have already lost two significant city trees directly across the street due to the Jan 2025 storm and an insect infestation. This project eliminates all of the protected trees on the site, and overwhelms it without providing the neighborhood with views and enjoyment of most of the landscaping of this proposed massive project.

Yes, we need to build housing and more affordable housing here in Pasadena, but the mandate from the state doesn't mean that developers should have free reign to build just anything that they want. We should be protecting the quality of our neighborhoods, and requiring developers to be responsive, cooperative and thoughtful seems something we should not have to give up in the quest for more housing. We can insist on better of them.

Chris Saylor,