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CARY BRAZEMAN, LA NEIGHBORS UNITED – PLUM COMMITTEE TESTIMONY

JANUARY 19, 2010

245 Motion on Magnolia Project Density Bonus

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee.

Cary Brazeman, LA Neighbors United, a former executive with CB Richard Ellis, and a former volunteer with the National Low Income Housing Coalition.

Thank you for agreeing to hear this case through the 245 action.

I will comment briefly on economic feasibility relative to the project before us.

It is the contention of experts we have consulted that neither the height incentive nor the density bonus requested by the applicant are necessary to make delivery of the 12 affordable units economically feasible. This is documented in pro forma Table 1 submitted by Seifel Associates, with design feasibility affirmed by Ovalle Architects.

The applicant has asked for total height of approximately 45 feet for the project, representing a 9-foot height incentive. The applicant has not provided any economic rationale supporting the need for a 9-foot height incentive.

Today we submitted an additional pro forma table, Table 2, which demonstrates that a 146-unit project can be constructed within a 40-foot high building envelope, generating attractive economic returns for the applicant. Our architect is prepared to testify to the design feasibility of this alternative.

Clearly, by this evidence, the applicant does not need a 9-foot height incentive for the project to be economically feasible. And nothing in state law (Saldana), either directly or by implication, precludes the city from granting an incentive request in part or denying an incentive request outright if it is not needed to make the project economically feasible.

We urge the Council to approve a 4-foot height incentive, with some allowance for architectural schmaltz above the roofline, so the building is more compatible with the neighborhood.

Thank you for your consideration.

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Council File No: 10-0017
Item No.: 13
~~Deputy~~: Submitted by Appellant

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