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From: August Steurer <augusthumor@gmail.com>
Date: March 3, 2014, 7:25:03 PM PST
To: Cesar Diaz <cesar.diaz@lacity.org>
Subject: New sub venture for Westfield

Cesar,

Writing on behalf of myself, I just want to say that the Village at Topanga project is now of some concern with the latest proposed subventure.

I see that the project is no longer mixed-use which was a major justification for approving the project.

While it still does create some jobs, the project is creating more imbalance in Warner Center.

It has been my long concern that Westfield is incapable of thinking long-term benefits for the community and they are incapable of doing mixed use, either horizontal or vertical.

AS far as the subventure goes, I would rather they do two phases if that is what it takes to get mixed-use development.

As I remember, the Development Agreement exempts them from Warner Center 2035 requirements for the life of the agreement unless they apply for something new, which they won't now because all the land will be developed.

What we have left is an open-air, retail strip center with a gas station on the corner.

When will they learn about 21st Century planning goals and get out of the '70s?

I know this is a tough request to deny, but really, they have to live with their mistakes and not take advantage of the community or was this their plan all along?

I doubt the Neighborhood Council would have even considered the project worth considering, nor would the planning department, if it was known in the beginning that it was only retail.

Also, I find it amusing that they now plan to have retail on the bottom floor of the parking structure, when they told us that it wasn't an option because it wouldn't work.

The community lost a lot when the intents of the old plan were blatantly ignored to placate Westfield and Costco. I would like to see some backbone from the Council Office to get the community some of what is being lost to their corporate screw-ups. Why should the community capitulate on its future. The Council Office needs to hold Westfield accountable to follow through on what was approved based on the original project. They need to reserve the land free to build commercial and residential to have the balance the community expected.

I would also like to point out that the EIR justified a lot of development based on the mixed-use which now will not happen under the subventure revision and therefore there will be more retail

automobile traffic trips than were claimed in the EIR because people will not be walking from on-site jobs. Whatever office building or hotel they occupy will be further away.

This sets a precedent on how other developers can get out of complying with a Specific Plan. That is: Propose what will please the planning department and then come back and gut what you don't want to do.

I have tried to give them the benefit of the doubt that they just didn't understand, but I have all along suspected that, based on our interactions with them in the beginning, Westfield only cares about sucking up all the retail onto their property, and does not care about building community through mixed-use.

My fear is that this also indicates that eventually they will plead that they can't afford to provide the community facilities as planned and eventually stick them in a hole-in-the-wall, do them on the cheap, or never do them at all.

Call me jaded,

August Steurer