

15 July 2014

Los Angeles City Council Members
Via email c/o: Sharon.gin@lacity.org
Mid City West Neighborhood Council

RE: LABONGE SLS MOTION 13-1478 DEMANDS MANDATED AMENDMENTS

Ineudated by the proliferation of Small Lot Subdivision ("SLS") developments, the La Brea Willoughby Coalition ("LWC") is very much buoyed by the citywide attention and support to the LaBonge motion 13-1478 for SLS Ordinance amendments. Many Council Offices, Neighborhood Councils, and neighborhood associations strongly urge establishment of mandated regulations to the Ordinance. Let us learn from the marijuana dispensaries, illegal billboards, and mcmansion fiascoes. Let us not repeat the futile attempts to regulate bad planning schemes after precedents and rules have been set outside --and too late for-- the city's oversight.

The LWC strongly urges the full City Council now 1) to place a moritorium on SLS projects, and 2) to sufficiently fund the DCP for complete review and revision of the Ordinance with suggested mandated standards to preserve planning and community protections.

Some excellent points to mandate, thus ensure SLS are compatible with the neighborhood would include the following:

- ◆ Turn the guidelines into mandatory, enforceable compliance rules
- ◆ Acknowledge cumulative affects of projects in relation to neighborhood and other projects
- ◆ Maintain neighborhood character and compatibility with project density, mass, and scale
- ◆ Follow neighborhood character and not allow homes to be oriented towards neighbors
- ◆ Require mandatory setbacks on front, sides and rear of all projects
- ◆ Restrict heights in relation/transition to the surrounding properties
- ◆ Ensure permanent, adequate access for public, occupant, and service emergency needs
- ◆ Apply the same rules as for apartment buildings, such as increased setbacks with increased height, mandatory open space, and guest parking
- ◆ Require private, common trash collection to avoid large numbers of containers in the street
- ◆ Permit no roof top decks due noise, privacy, and height concerns
- ◆ Require maintenance upkeep agreements for the common areas like driveways
- ◆ Count all habitable rooms for parking, other mandated requirements

Revise with a new view of SLS for a greater sense of future community stability and place.

To sincerely serve, protect, and respect,
Lucille Saunders, President,
La Brea Willoughby Coalition

June 2014

RE: COUNCIL OFFICES AND MWC PLUC PROTOCOLS FOR SLS ESSENTIAL

The La Brea Willoughby Coalition (“LWC”) urges the council offices and the Mid City West Community Council (“MCW”) and its Planning and Land Use Committee (“PLUC”) to establish Small Lot Subdivision projects (“SLS”) protocols. To get ahead of the curve on such SLS protocols are essential to greatly clarify and simplify the processes for developers, the city, and the community. They would also act to offset predictable negative impacts on our community and developments, especially time-consuming, legal processes.

SLS stated goals are 1) increased home ownership, 2) close to public transit systems, 3) decreased urban “sprawl,” 4) increased jobs, 5) increased property values, 6) no increase in density, and 7) business-friendly planning processes.

Through insights LWC gained in its long advocacy and collaboration in planning and development in our community, the real SLS impacts reveal: 1a) owners/occupants more likely to be single, who when they become “families, with children” or more affluent, significantly move to larger properties--with lawns, back yards. Such trends marginalize and mark the community as highly “transient,” as well as 3a) subsequently generate more urban extension/sprawl.

4a) Jobs in the planning/development are purely temporary--workers usually commute from very, very long distances during construction. 2a) Most [other/local] jobs increases are in low wage retail and food service. While these jobs may be closer to the community where lower paid employees may use public transit, they are not conducive to home ownership.

5a) Property values are only increased when property is sold, taxes are paid, or surrounding properties are renovated/improved--not demolished, new construction, or more units on lot.

6a) Indeed, SLS projects promote density. Where initially there were 2-4 bedrooms in single houses or multiple units on a lot, these projects build 4-5- or more single house units, each with 2-3 bedrooms and a “unique first floor living area with a bath” which could easily be another bedroom or rental space. These SLS units could actually multiple the initial occupants density 4-5-times. See attached “opportunity suggestions” per apartment owners’ magazine.

7a) Yes, it is “investor-friendly,” as most SLS are developed by/as such. How regrettable they are not “community-friendly” with their dark, cramped, boxes--much like “ding bat” type FAD of the 60s and 70s. Again, early- or low-income arrivals to the city will gravitate to the area, but again, will move out- and up-- as soon as possible as #3a above.

Community SLS protocols would positively manage these emerging projects development globally and proactively, rather than a case-by-case process.

To sincerely serve, protect, and respect,

Lucille Saunders,

President, La Brea Willoughby Coalition