



Sharon Dickinson <sharon.dickinson@lacity.org>

14-0057-S3

Expedited EIRs & Eliminating Site Plan Review

2 messages

ed hunt <edvhunt@earthlink.net>

Wed, Mar 2, 2016 at 6:10 AM

To: MITCH O'FARRELL <councilmember.ofarrell@lacity.org>

Cc: CHRISTINE PETERS <christine.peters@lacity.org>, Chris Robertson <chris.robertson@lacity.org>, AMY ABLACOT <amy.ablakat@lacity.org>, Aram Taslagyan <aram.taslagyan@lacity.org>, Melrose Hill <melrosehill@yahoogroups.com>, sharon.dickinson@lacity.org

Dear Mitch and team,

Re your efforts to expedite EIR's and eliminate Site Plan Reviews for projects of over 50 units; first, I am impressed at the quick progression from Motion to PLUM.

Please define "local affordability goals" as it would apply to our 4,600-resident Melrose Hill Neighborhood. Also what is meant by "administrative." Does this involve removing opportunities for community engagement for these over 50-unit housing projects?

On other subjects, any progress on our 3-years of requests regarding the current "unlimited height" zoning with no transitional heights backing up to one and two story bungalows, duplexes and apartments on our 4 blocks of N. Western Av.? Any progress on our HPOZ Expansion?

Sincerely,

Edward Villareal Hunt, AIA, ASLA

Chair, Planning Committee, Melrose Hill Neighborhood Association

RE: ITEM NO. (2) 14-0057-S3, Tuesday, March 1, 2016

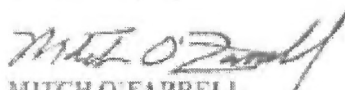
Dear Colleagues:

As you know, the City of Los Angeles is the least affordable rental market in the nation and now has the largest number of rent burdened households, spending more than 30% of their income on rent. Additionally, approximately 26,000 Angelenos are homeless and lack access to housing and other basic necessities.

It is critical that the City do what it can to encourage the production of affordable and permanent supportive housing. Site Plan Review can increase the cost and legal risk associated with developing affordable housing projects in the City, subjecting affordable housing developers to a lengthy application process and possible CEQA lawsuits. Affordable housing developers are less likely to be able to carry the cost of such delays that other market rate developers may be better positioned to weather.

Establishing a new ministerial process for affordable housing projects is an important step the City can take to increase the City's affordable housing production. I respectfully request that your Committee move this item forward so that we can continue to explore opportunities to amend the Site Plan Review ordinance that could establish a new ministerial review process for affordable housing projects.

With kind regards,



MITCH O'FARRELL
Councilmember, 13th District
Los Angeles City Council
City of Los Angeles

MOTION

HOUSE LA: Site Plan Review Modifications

The current shortage in housing in Los Angeles can be attributed to a serious lack of supply combined with a high level of demand. Rising rents is evidence to signal that more households would like to live in the area than there is housing to accommodate them. As the City's population grows, the shortfall in housing availability will have far-reaching and devastating effects on the Los Angeles region if City policymakers and community stakeholders fail to make a positive commitment to change.

The number of new residents in Los Angeles County grew by 1,382,520 between 1990 and 2006. During the same time period, there were only 201,440 new housing units produced. That means that only one housing unit was constructed for every 6.86 new people that needed housing. And numbers throughout the rest of the region say much the same thing -- demand continues to rise and the number of people per household has increased as the result of inadequate housing stock.

Key strategies to increase the housing stock include updating the City's Zoning Code to encourage responsible development, streamlining the approval of building permits, and expediting housing production when appropriate.


In 1990, the City enacted an ordinance that mandates a site plan review process for any proposed project that results in an increase of 50 or more residential units or guest rooms, or 50,000 non-residential square feet or more of non-residential floor area, or a change of use resulting in an increase of 500 or more daily vehicle trips. Since its enactment, the City has imposed a common set of mitigation measures on most housing developments. These common measures could be built into the Building and Zoning Codes as standard requirements imposed on new housing developments of 50 units or more.

The City should consider increasing the site plan review threshold from 50 units to a higher threshold so that only the largest projects are subject to the review while the development of in-fill housing consistent with the Zoning Code in already urbanized areas are permitted to be built. Projects that comply with the underlying zoning, meet design guidelines, and reach local affordability goals could be exempted from site plan review and allowed to proceed through the building permit approval process.

The current housing crisis merits an evaluation of the City's planning policies in relation to the ability to entitle, construct and deliver much-needed housing units to market. It is timely to evaluate the City's site plan review ordinance, given its 25-year history and the need to build certainty into the City's entitlement and permitting processes.

I THEREFORE MOVE the City Council instruct the Department of City Planning to prepare and present a report with recommendations to amend the site plan review ordinance, increasing the threshold from 50 residential units and establishing an administrative zoning clearance process for projects below this threshold as a strategy to increase the City's affordable housing production.

PRESENTED BY:


GILBERT A. CEDILLO
Councilman, 1st District

SECONDED BY:


ETNA ARMSTRONG
Councilwoman, 1st District

Sharon Dickinson <sharon.dickinson@lacity.org>
To: edvhunt@earthlink.net

Wed, Mar 2, 2016 at 6:11 AM

I will be out of the office until Tuesday March 8, 2016. If you need immediate assistance, please contact Etta Armstrong at (213) 978-1069.