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Mansionization CF 14-0656

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Homeowners and residents all over Los Angeles have asked again and again for relief from mansionization. The City Council approved a Motion by Councilmember Koretz that laid out clear, reasonable, and doable amendments to the citywide ordinances. The Los Angeles Conservancy and dozens of neighborhood councils and homeowners and residents associations asked for amendments that reflect the values and intent of the original Motion. But city planners seem to think they know better.

Their latest staff report has its strong points, but it falls far short in some very important ways.

- Communities in "the flats" identified the exclusion of attached garage space from floor area (a 400 sf freebie) as the single most damaging loophole. Even the staff report admits that this has been "one of the most requested changes" and that simply counting the space as floor area would encourage detached garages with driveways that "provide increased separation between houses."

But city planners recommend keeping the exemption for attached garage space.

- Communities in the hillsides asked above all that the city drop the 1,000 sf floor area minimum for non-conforming lots and tighten grading and hauling allowances.

But city planners recommend keeping the 1,000 sf minimum, as well as excessive grading and hauling allowances.

- Communities in RA/RS/RE zones asked first and foremost that the city eliminate bonuses, as they have done for R1 zones.

But city planners recommend keeping bonuses in these zones.

- And we all asked the city to keep the ordinance as straightforward and enforceable as possible.

But city planners recommend encroachment planes, side wall articulation, and a bonus for front façade articulation – complicated, hard-to-enforce design standards borrowed from re:code LA.

The Planning Department recommendations ignore direct requests from Councilmembers Koretz and Ryu. They ignore a broad consensus among the Los Angeles Conservancy; dozens of Neighborhood Councils and homeowners' and residents' associations; and hundreds and hundreds of individuals who have taken time to testify.

Ill-conceived concessions and compromises ruined the mansionization ordinances the first time. This has got to stop.