



Etta Armstrong <etta.armstrong@lacity.org>

Please read! Not just a form letter re masionization

1 message

camiam@earthlink.net <camiam@earthlink.net>

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Reply-To: camiam@earthlink.net

To: etta.armstrong@lacity.org

Dear Etta Armstrong

My wife and I just found out that our neighbor has sold her property to a developer. This news is devastating to me. I bought in the faircrest heights neighborhood 2009. I was excited to buy my 1920's spanish charmer in a neighborhood that proudly displayed it's unique spanish character (each house different from the next) The house we bought as newlyweds was in complete disrepair. Over the next 5 years my wife and I restored the house to it's orig glory. Spending all our weekends and spare time doing most of the projects ourselves. Now is the time we should be enjoying the fruits of our labor. But instead we find ourselves in a battle with outside developers, who are tearing down these beautiful homes and building giant box structures out of place with its neighbor's. I find it extremely painful that these developers, who do not live in my neighborhood are given the loopholes to change the face of what my neighborhood looks like and it's identity. In effect causing me true mental anguish. Do I stay in my home and be constantly reminded of the unnecessary destruction of homes and the neighborhood I fell in love with or do I move leaving the our first home that we put our heart and soul in to restoring. Even moving seems fruitless because no matter where we would move under the current regulations no place is safe in LA from these developers.

PLEASE!!!!!! Reconsider the originally proposed ordinances highlighted bellow.

Thank you, Cameron and Namita Steenhagen

PS our house is only 878 sq feet and we are more than happy with the amount of living space. Our home has been revisited by the children and grandchildren of the previous owners, from as far away as Israel, proving that these homes are important to the history of Los Angeles.

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.

The primary potential benefit is nuisance reduction; there are fewer loud parties if units are not available to be rented for more than half the year. But since the ordinance already cuts down on nuisances by assigning liability for them to hosts, the day limits are overkill. In addition, why should responsible hosts who assure that their guests don't produce nuisances have to pay the price of shutting their businesses for half the year?

Some think that Airbnb units are functionally hotels and think that hotels undermine the "neighborhood feel" of a place. But when Airbnb guests are polite and respectful of the neighborhoods where they stay, this is simply not true. In fact, the reverse is true. Unlike hotels, which provide many services to their guests, Airbnb units bring guests to the neighborhood services that all neighborhood residents enjoy. When they work well, they give greater cohesion to our neighborhoods, not less.

• **You should not impose criminal liability on violators.**

The proposed ordinance makes violation a misdemeanor. Enforcement of compliance with the ordinance does not require misdemeanor liability; civil penalties will suffice. Misdemeanor classification can have vast unintended and terrible consequences for citizens who really have not done anything worthy of calling a crime. For instance, someone with a misdemeanor conviction who is later found guilty of simple possession of marijuana faces far more serious penalties than someone without such a past conviction. Misdemeanor violations can trigger revocation of probation, and can make it impossible or very difficult to get various professional licenses. Given that Airbnb is collecting and remitting transient occupancy tax to the city on behalf of hosts, a violator is not cheating anyone out of anything and should not be labeled a criminal.

The city should nurture the Airbnb market, embrace it and benefit from it, rather than shut it down.

Sincerely,



Gideon Yaffe
Professor of Law and Professor of Philosophy & Psychology
Yale Law School
Resident of Los Angeles District 13