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CITY OF LOS ANGELES

JUN 03 2016

CITY PLANNING  
PROJECT PLANNING

May 25, 2016

Planning and Land Use Management Committee  
200 North Spring Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: CPC-2013-4028-GPA-ZC-SPR-ZAA  
CD5

CF: 15-1369

I am writing this letter in opposition to the appeal of Fisch Properties, LP to overturn last summer's unanimous decision of the Planning Commission's 2015 decision to deny Zoning Changes, General Plan Amendments, Variances and Discretionary permits with regard to the captioned Development project covering 411-439 Hamel Road, Wilshire Community Plan Area. Hopefully, the following will help reiterate the opposition of our City, our neighborhood, and our Councilman, Paul Koretz as it pertains to the blatantly outrageous intention of the Developer.

1. I am a resident of Arnaz Villas, 438 South Arnaz Drive, Los Angeles 90048, which property is immediately adjacent to the proposed 88-unit, 5-story (plus 2 additional levels of underground parking) structure.
  - a. Until two weeks prior to last summer's public hearings wherein Fisch requested and was subsequently vehemently and unanimously denied Zoning Changes, a General Plan Amendment, Variances and Discretionary Permits, Arnaz Villas had never been notified of such a project.
  - b. In my effort to protect the integrity of this neighborhood, I appeared and spoke at the various meetings and wrote a letter dated July 7, 2015, a copy of which is enclosed herewith, protesting this impossibly defiant plan to contradict the very essence of the rules and regulations that govern what is best for this area and therefore, the City.
  - c. Most astutely, the intention of Fisch Properties was met with unanimously well-informed and, therefore, negative comments and, finally, DENIALS of the request
2. Approximately two months ago, I and other Arnaz Villa residents were invited to meet with Veronica Becerra, representative of Fisch Properties, LLP to discuss what it would take for us to get on board.
  - a. We each made it perfectly clear that it would take Fisch Properties adhering to the rules and regulations of The City of Los Angeles exactly as they had been designed, designated and passed in the betterment of our specific area and the City as a whole.
  - b. Essentially, our comments were met with disdain and the promise that Fisch has made the commitment to "well, this is going to get built." We also felt the

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90048

implied (and absurd) threat that if their plan is not built, what will be built “will be far worse!”

- c. Furthermore, we were told that Mr. Fisch wanted to create this huge property because “he needs to leave it to his grandchildren who do not really work that hard!”
3. While I have the utmost respect for the denial of support of the Fisch project from each level of the “powers that be,” may I please reiterate a few of the neighborhood’s most significant points of contention,
  - a. The construction of such a structure ignores the almost certain dangers, catastrophic damage, and hazards to nearby properties,
  - b. Fisch is intent on building 88 lower- quality (defined as more affordable, but described as lacking in décor niceties, like granite) one-bedroom units.
  - c. There are to be 80 tandem parking spots, for the 88 units...and only 6 guest spaces
    - i. This clearly creates a parking nightmare for the already saturated streets
    - ii. It was Fisch’s contention to you and to us that these units will rent starting at \$1,400 per month. However, their supposed allies from several blocks west, on Burton Way, were told that rentals will start at \$2,400.
  - d. Fisch intends to take up the entire block with this structure and because of parking garage entry from the north ally-way, the possibility of the “easier walking to Robertson Boulevard, through the revitalized ally” is completely contradictory. And more far more dangerous, especially with a home for the ageing on the northern boundary,
  - e. Fisch stated the project would take approximately 1 year to complete which is grossly underestimated, even to the less-informed simplest layperson.
  - f. This neighborhood belongs to Cedars Sinai Hospital, THE major trauma hospital of our city. It therefore belongs to all of LOS ANGELES. Emergency Vehicles constantly use these streets—day and night, especially to get clear passage from the extreme traffic on Robertson, LaCienega and San Vicente Boulevards.
4. Please, you/we got it right the first time. Continue to respect the original intentions of the City Plan for this residential area. The rules currently in place were well conceived and have been profoundly practical. Most importantly, what you have regulated for this area makes it and us safer and more respected. This is the heart of an increasingly popular, vital and prideful neighborhood.
5. Please stay the course. The right course. Deny this Appeal

Thank you.

Very truly yours,

  
MARLENE WHITE LENARD

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Tuesday, July 7, 2015

Office of Zoning  
Department of City Planning  
Att: Debbie Lawrence, AICP  
200 N. Spring Street  
Room 763  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: Opposition re Case No: CPC-2013-4028-GPA-ZC-SPR-ZAA  
CEQA: ENV=2013-4029-MND  
411-439 Hamel Road  
Wilshire Community Plan Area

Dear Ms. Lawrence:

In response to your suggestion that we contact you further within a week of the July 2 Public Hearing on the captioned matter, this letter is being written to express that it is, frankly, quite frightening to find myself/my co-owners of 438 S. Arnaz Drive in such a "David" position against such a blatantly duplicitous "Goliath" as Fisch Properties LP ("Fisch" herein). (My home is situated on the N.E. corner of Arnaz and Colgate, facing on Colgate.) Now that I have had enough sleepless nights to fully digest what I heard and saw for the first time at Thursday's meeting, may I please add these follow-up thoughts.

1. It is outrageous that residents living west of Robertson Boulevard have been kept informed and consistently wooed by Fisch Properties over the last two years, **while we, who live adjacent to the pending project, have NEVER heard a single word or seen a single flyer or piece of information until your barely 2-week advance Notice of Thursday's Public Hearing.** In response to my speaking at the meeting, Fisch's representative said "we will be happy to talk to you now" during the chaos and impossible time restraints after the meeting!
  - a. It is unequivocally obvious that Fisch stayed far away from those of us who will be most severely impacted.
2. Fisch chooses to ignore or deny the potential dangers and hazard to nearby properties when they dig two stories underground for their parking. Any thinking person knows that such an endeavor has the potential of catastrophic damage to nearby structures. **What they are planning, in fact, is 7-level structure!!!**
  - a. I have been involved with other building projects and one major one (within ¼ mile) and the excavation of one level for underground parking was fraught with

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horrific problems, property damage, soil contamination from run-off and extensive delays.

3. Fisch's contention that 88, 1-bedroom apartments will deter Air B 'n B renters is absurd. What they are actually creating is EXACTLY what will draw that potential client: they are designing a virtual hotel in the midst of our charming, beautiful and REGULATED neighborhood of families of all ages as well as the elderly living out their last years in assisted living and/or nursing homes.
  - a. In fact, one of my great concerns is that the ultimate plan will be to turn this project into a "transitional" rental where short-term leasing is available and there is the forever constant turn-over of residents. That potential is actually inbred in the current design.
  - b. The idea that if they built 2 to 3-bedroom apartments, each unit would be populated by droves of people is absurd. I live alone in a 3- bedroom unit; families live in larger units; adult roommates have rooms of their own.
  - c. For every single one of those 88, 1-bedroom units, there will be potential visitors that need far more parking spaces than their "more than required " 6 guest spaces.
    - i. People working at or visiting Cedars Sinai Hospital who already use street parking are far more worthy of the need for street spaces than this intended over-sized, over-populated structure.
4. At the beginning of the Fisch presentation they lauded the "beautiful community gardens [they are creating] where people can come with their dogs." Much more quietly, they later slipped in the fact that they could not be sure about the security issues that might play out for the use of those two small areas. Ms. Lawrence, they clearly NEVER ever intended those spaces for "community" use and none of us are naïve enough to believe otherwise.
5. I also protest their claim that their building will turn ours into a walking neighborhood. We are a walking neighborhood--for pleasure. We will not likely ever be a walking neighborhood for responsibilities for our homes and family needs, i.e. parks, markets. Their adding 160 parking spaces will only bring 160+ more cars to these blocks. They will be creating a more dangerous environment for those who have invested their lives here and for those who need to be here.
  - a. May I remind you that this is a neighborhood of elderly residents of nursing homes and other senior living environments who are often walked in wheelchairs or walkers with care-givers. Families walk their children in carriages and teach their children to ride bikes.
6. How dare Fisch Properties LP contend that this project will take only 1 year to complete! That representation presumes all of us to be fools! It would be a miracle if it were

completed in two years and much more likely in the range of three years, presuming no complications....which always occur.

- a. In fact, if it were completed in less, it affirms their declared effort to keep the building so affordable as to create units shoddier than what are deserved here.
7. Fisch further stated that their intention is to start rentals at \$1,400 per month going up to \$2,500. For your information, residents living blocks away from this location were told by Fisch representatives that rentals will start at \$2,400!!!
8. Why is not anyone outraged that this project will dramatically increase water usage both in construction phase as well as such in this high-density residential project in a concentrated area? We are in the midst of a mega-drought!
9. Finally, I must reiterate to you the most major issue that I presented at the Meeting on Thursday: Emergency Vehicles constantly use these streets, all day and all night. This is not only our neighborhood of families with children, single people, and the elderly, but it is also the neighborhood of Cedars Sinai Hospital, THE major trauma hospital of our city. It therefore belongs to all of Los Angeles. We are all in jeopardy under the Fisch plan.

Please respect the original intentions of the City Plan for this residential area. Adherence to existing zoning and variance restrictions is critical. Furthermore, the rules currently in place are and have been profoundly practical. More importantly, they make the area safer.

Please do not permit a zoning change to allow for a 5-level (7-levels, in truth!) complex of 88, 1-bedroom units. Please do not approve the 2 levels of subterranean parking under those 5 levels of apartments. Please do not change variances that will permit encroachment on what have always been historically appropriate homes and public spaces, thereby bringing the Fisch apartments to the edges of and looming over adjacent and other nearby homes. Please do not support the demise of our long-existing neighborhood culture. Such a project, as now designed, not only physically endangers our homes, it endangers lives. Please support our "Davidian" effort to prevail over this "Goliath."

Thank you.

Very truly yours,

MARLENE WHITE LENARD

cc: Paul Koretz, Councilman  
Corin Kahn, Esquire  
Stephanie Levine, Esquire

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